NEIGHBOUR ARRESTED IN CHILD'S MURDER, PG 8

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Celebrity Buzz

Pete Wentz debuts baby online
pg 53

Coors Light cools on billboard that bashed Toronto

ADVERTISING Molson-Coors Canada is taking down billboard ads in British Columbia that take a jab at Toronto residents.

The ad for Coors Light beer declares the beer is "Colder Than Most People From Toronto."

Coors Light brand marketing manager Adam Moffat says there was no intention to offend anyone but Molson-Coors admits they "misfired on this one."

Moffat says enough people have expressed their displeasure with the ads that the company has decided to take them down.

He says about 30 or 40 people phoned or emailed complaints yesterday, but the company has also been monitoring comments online, including on the networking site Twitter. THE CANADIAN PRESS

ShareYourViews
torontoletters@metronews.ca

Business pg 16

Sold out! No app for that

Metro Drive pg 25

Ushering in a quiet rebellion

Venus Loses

CARLOS OSORIO/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Venus Williams of the United States lost to Kateryna Bondarenko of the Ukraine during their first round match-up at the Rogers Cup in Toronto yesterday. Bondarenko won 1-6, 7-5, 6-4.
More Rogers Cup coverage, page 18.

Subway shooting

Coxwell station shut down as police investigate robbery

Transit riders were breathing a sigh of relief last night after no one was hurt by shots fired on the bus bay platforms of Coxwell subway station.

Police spent most of rush hour investigating a mysterious shooting at Coxwell subway station that left no bullet holes or victims.

"There were about eight to 10 people outside the station at the time, but there were quite a few people inside because it was rush hour," Toronto Police Sgt. Paul Jones said.

A single shot was fired outside the station's entrance on Strathmore Avenue around 6 p.m. after what police suspect was an attempted robbery between two men.

Investigators on scene found one shell casing, but no evidence of what or who the bullet struck, said Staff Sgt. David Vickers.

There is no broken glass or evidence the intended victim has suffered any injuries, but bullet fragments were found on the sidewalk.

Police believe the suspect fled from the scene in a car and the intended victim ran into the station.

There are also reports that the suspects drove away in a black Volkswagen Jetta.

The station was cordoned off and subway service between Greenwood and Woodbine station was suspended for a few hours as shuttle buses ran along that stretch of the Danforth. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Prime Minister's Office makes bum-bling mistake in Nunavut

VISIT A bumble by the Prime Minister's Office has residents of Nunavut alternately chuckling and cringing.

A news release Monday outlined Prime Minister Stephen Harper's itinerary as he began a five-day Arctic tour.

The release repeatedly spelled the capital of Nunavut as Iqualuit — rather than Iqaluit, which means "many fish" in the Inuktitut language.

The extra "u" makes a big difference.

"It means people with unwiped bums," said Sandra Inutiq of the office of the Languages Commissioner of Nunavut.

"It means people with unwiped bums."
Sandra Inutiq on PMO's spelling mistake

"It's not exactly a nice term."

Inutiq said people who speak Inuktitut are sometimes offended or even angered when non-northerners incorrectly spell the name of their capital.

The Prime Minister's Office was apologetic, calling the gaffe a human error that might teach Canadians an important lesson about spelling mistakes.

Inutiq estimated that nearly half of the correspondence received by her office has Iqaluit misspelled. THE CANADIAN PRESS

I knead you
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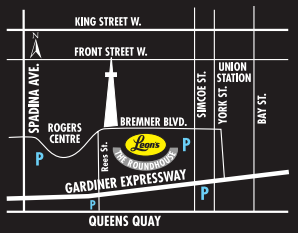

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Crash causes traffic snarls on 427 ramp
A multi-vehicle collision on the Highway 427 northbound ramp to eastbound Highway 401 sent three people to hospital yesterday. Up to five vehicles collided just before 1 p.m., provincial police say. Traffic was backed up for nearly two hours. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Local

Viking maker recalls fridge model

Faulty refrigerator doors have triggered the recall of Viking Side-by-Side Refrigerator/Freezer products. Viking Range Corp. of Greenwood, Miss. has received 57 complaints including four reported injuries after the defective doors caused bruises, broken toes/fingers, strains, and damage to floors and counters. About 1800 of the appliances have been sold in Canada. The recall also includes the built-in refrigerators with bottom freezer by Viking. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

AWARDS
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Tomorrow's Metro

Liquid Assets
Wine columnist Peter Rockwell gives the grill one last go.

metronews.ca
WHAT'S ONLINE TODAY

Video Stephen Harper touts the Arctic economy after an embarrassing PR stumble at **metronews.ca/canada**

Blogs The 100-Day Raw Food Challenge gets its protein fix with a recipe for raw peanut butter

Lotteries

Ontario Pick 3: 5 7 2; Ontario Pick 4 : 3 2 1 2
Encore: 2235070
Daily Keno: 2, 4, 5, 18, 25, 26, 30, 33, 34, 38 44, 48, 56, 60, 61, 63, 65, 66, 69, 70
These results are not official.

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Shelter denies members

Humane Society rejects applicants critical of organization

The Toronto Humane Society has denied membership to at least seven of the people who have criticized its president and its animal care practices.

Former donor relations employee Rachelle Gordon was apparently rejected because of a comment she made on a blog.

Longtime donor Danielle Just-McCarthy was believed to have been rejected because of a Facebook post in which she expressed dismay at "horrendous conditions" at a shelter she said was inhumane.

And in what a Humane Society spokesman yesterday called an "administrative oversight," former animal care worker Marcie Laking, a leader in the movement to reform the organization, was mailed a rejection even though she didn't apply.

All three were accused, in August letters written by Humane Society secretary-treasurer Robert Hambley, of making statements that "appear to defame" or "appear to have defamed" the organization. They believe, however, that they were barred in an effort by volunteer president Tim Trow to punish dissenters and maintain his power. Only members can speak or vote at the annual meeting at which board members are elected.

COLIN MCCONNELL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Hundreds of demonstrators turned out at the Toronto Humane Society on River Street in the rain in this file photo to protest the actions of the president Tim Trow.

Humane Society spokesman Ian McConachie acknowledged six rejections, not including the erroneous Laking letter. He said the board decided to reject three people who have repeatedly uttered lies about the organization's care practices and three people for breaching their contracts.

McConachie said Trow and Hambley were unavailable for comment. In an email, he said the Humane Society took issue with pamphlets that claimed its policies "leave animals neglected, suffering and dying in their cages" — a statement Laking and several former society veterinarians continue to say is true — and unspecified comments uttered at a June protest.

The Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals launched an investigation, which continues, while Laking and others organized the protest. Another is set for Sept. 12.
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Kurdish superstar's nightmare takedown

For a moment, Kurdish singer Sivan Perwer wondered if his driver had driven onto a movie set when half a dozen provincial police cruisers surrounded his black Hummer.

Perwer, a superstar in the Kurdish community, was on his way to a concert Sunday. Some people in the SUV were filming some countryside for Perwer's TV show.

Then at about 8:30 p.m, an OPP cruiser sped up beside the group on Highway 427, just north of the Queensway. Armed officers pulled Perwer and his entourage out of the car, then handcuffed them, he said.

"We were afraid to make mistakes."
Sivan Perwer, singer

"They took us under fire. And wouldn't let us talk. They yelled, 'Stop talking or I take you down or I kill you,'" he said. "We were afraid to make mistakes and they shoot us."

A motorist had called police after catching a glimpse of a long-lens camera through the Hummer's windows. To the motorist, it looked like a gun, said OPP Sgt. Dave Woodford.

For Perwer, who sings about peace, the incident was more than an innocent mistake. "I'm really in shock still. Still I have pain in my arm," he said.
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Reward for information on neglected dog

CRUELTY Durham Humane Society officials are calling it one of the worst cases of animal cruelty they have seen.

They are offering a $1,500 reward for information leading to the conviction of the owner of a severely neglected dog picked up by animal control officers in Clarington on Sunday.

"He's in horrific condition."
Debby Houghton, investigator

The emaciated male Chow, estimated to be five years old, has filthy, matted fur that has fallen off its face, which is oozing pus and dried blood. The dog's belly is covered in open sores and its nails are so overgrown, they are curling back into the pads of its feet, causing more bleeding and infection, said animal cruelty investigator Debby Houghton.

"He's in horrific condition and in a lot of pain. It's pretty bad," she said.
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

News in brief

DROWNED A 20-year man from Ireland who was due home next week after visiting on a summer work visa drowned yesterday in Lake Ontario, the latest in a spate of drownings in the province. Police said the unidentified man was with a group of friends camping on the Toronto Islands overnight and went for a quick swim early yesterday. The body was found some nine metres off the beach in a little over two metres of water, police said.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Scarborough residents forced out of homes

Residents of at least two homes in the Morningside Ave. and Sheppard Ave. E. area were forced out of their homes early yesterday morning as police searched for a man involved in a domestic dispute. The man was found in an attic and arrested about 30 minutes later. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

School's Catholic advantage

Socially-sensitive report spotlights mysterious effect

He calls it the Catholic effect; that when you screen out the family differences that can give some schools an edge — which parents have more education, how long they have lived in Canada — Ontario's Catholic schools still come out on top.

Economics professor David Johnson, whose fancy demographic formula compares the test scores of Ontario schools in a more socially sensitive way than just ranking raw results, says his latest report spotlights this mysterious Catholic advantage.

"Of 11 schools in Ontario that performed better than all others in both Grade 3 and Grade 6 in their socio-economic range, 10 of them are Catholic — yet it's a much smaller school system," marvelled Johnson, a professor at Wilfrid Laurier University and author of the latest C.D. Howe report called Ontario's Best Public Schools.

"It may be these schools are more motivated because of their spiritual focus, or it could be that Catholic families have a choice as to whether to send their kids to a separate or public school, so that puts pressure on Catholic schools to do better."

Of three GTA regions Johnson studied after he finished his survey — York, Toronto and Peel — the Catholic school board in each case had a higher portion of schools outscoring their demographic peers across the province. Johnson made headlines last year with a deliberate comparison of Catholic and public schools that concluded Catholic schools do better. This latest report, released yesterday, has a broader focus.

Beate Planche, York Region school board's superintendent of curriculum, warns against ranking schools. "Good schools, to parents, are those where their kids are doing well, feel safe and belong, and if the school is accessible to them," she said. "Rankings are one slice, and schools are far more complex than one slice."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Standardized testing

- The province's elementary teachers have voted to create an educational video to show the "negative effects" standardized testing has had on the public education system here and around the world.

The move was approved by delegates yesterday at the week-long annual meeting of the Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario, held in downtown Toronto.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Summer Island paddle

DAVID COOPER/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Island summer campers paddle past the city skyline yesterday at Sunfish Gap.

Germs concern going back to school

When Karen Shein sends her two children off to elementary school in a few weeks, they will be packing more than just the usual back-to-class gear.

Tucked into their school bags will be alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

And this fall, with a surge of swine flu cases possibly in the offing, keeping hands clean could be more critical than ever to prevent children getting sick or spreading the virus.

"With the pandemic," says Dr. Bonnie Henry of the B.C. Centre for Disease Control, "we've been saying it's really important this year more than others, even, for you to have the ability for children to wash their hands, because we know that influenza is what we call 'amplified' in schools."

But not all schools are equipped to provide the basics needed to accomplish that goal.

Washrooms in their Toronto school are equipped with soap dispensers, there are no paper towels, Shein says.

Chris Broadbent, manager of health and safety for the Toronto District School Board, says cost and vandalism are concerns when it comes to stocking washrooms in its 560 elementary and secondary schools.

Over the years, expensive and environmentally wasteful paper towels have given way in many schools to hand dryers, he says.

"But all of our washrooms are equipped with liquid soap and hand dryers of one description, whether it's paper towels or an electric hand blower."

While students aren't encouraged to bring their own hand sanitizer, schools can order it from the board's distribution warehouse, Broadbent says. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Flu Outbreak

Premier steps in and ends airport limo battle

CABS Objecting to Toronto's efforts to restrict airport limousines from picking up fares within city's limits, Premier Dalton McGuinty stepped into the fray to allow the practice.

While defending the good working relationship Queen's Park has with City Hall, McGuinty's government unilaterally made a regulation change July 30 to the City of Toronto Act.

"We've been stabbed in the back by Dalton McGuinty and the provincial government."
Counc. Howard Moscoe

"I can say that even a cursory review of our relationship with the City of Toronto would demonstrate that we have worked well and hard with them to provide them with more authority, more funds and just to strike a more productive and cooperative relationship," McGuinty told reporters in Ottawa yesterday.

Toronto politicians are fuming over the provincial government's move, which came with little warning.

"It was totally out of the blue," said Councillor Howard Moscoe, chair of city council's licensing committee. "We've been stabbed in the back by Dalton McGuinty and the provincial government."

Airport travellers will see no change.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Exiled trustees holding own board meetings

EDUCATION Toronto's exiled Catholic trustees, who have been out of power for more than a year now, are holding their own board meeting — in their old stomping ground, no less.

Trustees John Del Grande and Rob Davis have booked the boardroom at the headquarters of the Toronto Catholic District School Board for a meeting next Monday and are hoping that fellow trustees, parents and the public will attend.

Their decisions won't be enforceable, but Del Grande said it is important to show trustees are working together and to give parents a place to be heard. He said trustees can listen to parent concerns and make recommendations to the supervision team.

"We have to account for our time," he said. "We are getting our full paycheque and we've heard commentaries some (trustees) … are more, or less, accessible.

"It's a good idea to get in front of our constituents, and create a formal body to recognize their concerns."

The trustees are calling themselves the Association of Catholic Trustees and have set up a website, tcstrustees.org.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

News in brief

SUSPECT A Toronto man is charged with sexual assault after a woman was allegedly accosted on a TTC subway train last month. Officers issued an arrest warrant for Omar Matthews, 25, on July 30. On Monday, Matthews turned himself in to police.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Former Vaughan employee files privacy complaint

A former municipal employee of Vaughan has filed a complaint to Ontario's privacy commissioner, alleging that the city recently released confidential medical and legal documents. Paul Donofrio said the documents had been sealed when he settled his wrongful dismissal suit against the city last year. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE PHOTO

The lawyer for Suaad Hagi Mohamud, left, who was detained in Kenya for months, is calling on the government to return the passport that ignited controversy over Mohamud's identity in the first place.

Lawyer squares off on passport debacle

CITIZENSHIP The passport which stranded a Toronto woman in Kenya for months is now at the centre of a standoff between the federal government and the lawyer representing Suaad Hagi Mohamud.

Raoul Boulakia is taking his demands that the government immediately turn over Mohamud's passport and case file to Federal Court while officials in Ottawa remain vague on the whereabouts of the crucial piece of ID.

The demand is the latest twist in the debacle that has become Mohamud's life as her government first branded her an impostor, then consented to test her DNA and eventually repatriated her back to Canada. THE CANADIAN PRESS

News in brief

BY-ELECTION Premier Dalton McGuinty is poised to call a Toronto byelection today, the results of which could have national implications. McGuinty is expected to announce voters in St. Paul's will go to the polls on Sept. 17 to elect a successor to former minister Michael Bryant. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Taxpayers footing bill for lawsuit

Waste management official argues defamation over newspaper's story about green bins

Toronto taxpayers will foot the initial legal bill for a senior manager who is suing the Toronto Star over a series of articles on organics collection.

A lawyer for Geoff Rathbone, general manager of the city's solid waste management services division, served a notice of libel on Friday, arguing the July articles by reporter Moira Welsh are defamatory. The stories examined the city's green bin organics program and questioned whether claims for particular diversion rates were accurate.

City policy, approved by council in 2005, allows the city solicitor to recommend, with the approval of the city manager and chief financial officer, advancing up to $25,000 to cover the initial stages of any lawsuit launched by a manager.

It's not clear if this is the first time a city manager has used the policy. Any further financing would need approval from the employee and labour relations committee and city council. A recent staff report says a libel case could cost $150,000 or more in legal fees if it goes to trial, although actions are often settled before trial.

But the news comes about a week after city council voted not to have a policy giving politicians financial backing to sue citizens on the taxpayers' dime. Instead, requests by council for cash to launch lawsuits would be approved on an individual basis, as was done for Councillor Sandra Bussin at the same meeting.

TORSTAR FILE PHOTO

Geoff Rathbone, seen here in this file photo, served a notice to the Toronto Star claiming defamatory comments.

The decision to fund Rathbone's case is part of a wider indemnification policy that applies to staff at the middle management and management levels because unionized employees are covered under collective agreements. The policy also applies to cases where a civil action or proceeding not covered by the city's insurance policy is brought against an employee.

City spokesperson Patricia Trott said she would not get into specifics of this case, but that the city is following the existing policy.

"This is a legal action. I don't want to comment on how the decisions were made," she said. "There is a policy in place, and it describes circumstances under which an individual can be compensated for legal costs with approval from city officials. And that's what has happened."

The city did not launch legal action against the Star because, legally, a municipality cannot be defamed.

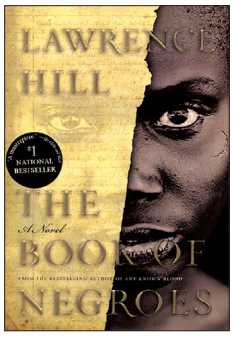
In a 2006 case, Superior Court Justice David Corbett ruled that the town of Halton Hills could not sue a resident for comments he made on his website. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Educators mull removal of To Kill A Mockingbird

EDUCATION The award-winning novel To Kill a Mockingbird, written in the midst of the American civil rights movement, will turn 50 next year.

It may be the right time, many educators say, for the book to take an early retirement from Canadian high school curriculum.

As the dust settles around the latest Mockingbird controversy — in which a principal at a Brampton Catholic school removed the book from the Grade 10 English curriculum in June following a complaint from a parent about the "language" in the book — another debate has emerged: Is it still the best book to teach diverse, multiracial, multiethnic students in the Greater Toronto Area about race relations and anti-discrimination in 2009?



Canadian books that could replace To Kill a Mockingbird, compiled using suggestions of teachers and librarians, include The Book of Negroes by Lawrence Hill.

"It's a great book, but how many great books, how many classics have been written over the past five decades that might do a better a job in dealing with these issues?" said George Elliott Clarke, a writer and English professor at the University of Toronto who specializes in African-Canadian literature.

The principal and staff at St. Edmund Campion's Secondary School plan to replace the book with a "Canadian novel that better reflects the Canadian experience," said Bruce Campbell, spokesperson for the Dufferin-Peel Catholic School Board. They will choose the replacement in coming months.

To Kill a Mockingbird is a story of an Alabama lawyer who struggles with racial injustice in the 1930s. Teachers at the school say it is a much-needed text and teaching tool for discussion in a school where a significant number of the students are black.

But that's exactly why it shouldn't be used, said Clarke.

"If we are really interested it talking about the black experience, why don't we read books written by black people, or that at least talk about our experience," he said.

"The problem with To Kill a Mockingbird is that it is not about black people, it's not even about our struggle. It's about white people learning to do the right thing, and standing up heroically as they should against racism and injustice in American South in the 1930s," said Clarke.

Chris D'Souza, a former teacher with the board, taught the book for more than a decade before a student in his classroom said she was tired of reading books written by white authors. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Replacements?

- An 11-year-old girl is abducted from West Africa and forced into slavery in South Carolina, in The Book of Negroes by Lawrence Hill. She forges her way to freedom in Nova Scotia, and eventually embarks on a harrowing journey back to Africa.
- Child of Dandelions by Shenaaz Nanji — A book about the terror and violence that a 15-year-old and her family face after former Ugandan president Idi Amin gives those of Indian origin 90 days to leave the country.
- The Bite of the Mango by Mariatu Kamara with Susan McClelland — An autobiographical story of a 12-year-old Mariatu, whose hands are cut off in a rebel attack in Sierra Leone. She writes a memoir of survival.

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162.07/09
Taxes extra. Price subject to change without notice. Telehop comparison based on Telehop HomePhone Basic Plan with 8 calling features for $8.99, and E911 Service Fee for $0.95. 2 year committment required. Comparison to Rogers based on Rogers Phone Line including 5 calling features for $41.95, Message Relay (TTY) for $0.19, and 911 Emergency Access Fee for $0.22. Comparison to Bell based on Home Phone Choice package including 5 calling features for $37.95, Long Distance Access Fee for $5.95, and Touch Tone, 911, and Message Relay Service for $2.99. Rogers rates as of June 29, 2009. Source: Rogers.ca. Rogers is a trademark of Rogers Communication Inc. or an affiliate. Bell rates as of June 29, 2009. Source: Bell.ca. Bell is a trademark of Bell Canada.

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HWY: 5.7L/100KM – 50 MPG
CITY: 7.9L/100KM – 36 MPG◊

FIVE-STAR SAFETY RATING◊

G3 Wave 5-Door SE Model shown with CF5, D52 and PW8††

2009 PONTIAC G5 SE

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CITY: 8.7L/100KM – 33 MPG◊

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HWY: 6.2L/100KM – 46 MPG
CITY: 8.0L/100KM – 35 MPG◊

Automobile Journalists Association of Canada
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FIVE-STAR SAFETY RATING◊

Vibe GT model shown††

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HWY: 11.1L/100KM – 25 MPG
CITY: 15.4L/100KM – 18 MPG◊

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5-Star Safety Award◊

Sierra Ext. Cab SLE shown with PDD††

Automobile Journalists Association of Canada
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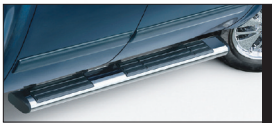

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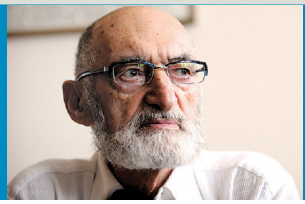
Window washer dead after falling around 20 storeys

A Montreal window washer plunged to his death yesterday after his platform gave way and crashed into the roof of a restaurant about 20 storeys below. Police say they have ruled out foul play and the health and safety board has undertaken an investigation. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canada



N.B. won't appeal abortion ruling

The government of New Brunswick will not appeal a court ruling that gives Dr. Henry Morgentaler, left, the right to sue the province to pay for abortions at his private clinic in Fredericton. In May, the New Brunswick Court of Appeal dismissed a provincial claim that Morgentaler didn't have standing to represent the interests of women in the province. THE CANADIAN PRESS

ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Prime Minister Stephen Harper speaks with Minister of Health Leona Aglukkaq and John Hussey as he tours the Arctic Winter Games hockey arena in Iqaluit yesterday.

Harper unveils northern development agency

NUNAVUT Prime Minister Stephen Harper has officially rolled out a long-promised northern development agency on the first day of his Arctic tour.

The agency — known as CanNor — will be headquartered in Iqaluit, Nunavut, with regional offices in Yellowknife and Whitehorse.

Harper says the agency will put an end to decision-making in southern office towers on northern development.

"The era of benevolent yet ultimately ineffective paternalism is over," Harper said to the applause of local residents.

"The days of development decisions being made in a city thousand of kilometres away are past."

CanNor, which will funnel business support and infrastructure cash, was mentioned in last fall's throne speech.

The new agency will have a budget of $50 million over five years.

Critics have dismissed Harper's five-day tour as a repackaging of old announcements. But Harper says his government has placed special emphasis on the Far North.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

News in brief

WILDLIFE A cold summer has been a boon for the beleaguered Hudson Bay polar bears. Experts say the summer sea ice has lasted longer than it has in years, which has given the region's more than 1,000 bears extra time to hunt, feed and raise healthy cubs.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Slain boy's neighbour arrested

Mentally ill woman caught after autistic child found dead

Police acting on a 9-1-1 call arrested a mentally ill woman yesterday, hours after urging residents of this small community to be wary of her because a 12-year-old autistic boy living a few doors down was found slain in her home.

"Yes, we've located her," said Cpl. Dan Moskaluk.

Kimberly Ruth Noyes was arrested without incident near the grounds of the local high school. Moskaluk said she's in custody and the investigation is ongoing. No charges have been laid.

Earlier in the day, police warned the public to be on the lookout for the 42-year-old, who they said has bipolar disorder and could pose a danger.

"She is the primary resident of this residence and the body was found in her residence, so it would stand to reason that certainly she is being sought in connection with the investigation," Moskaluk said.

Noyes lives in the same townhouse complex as John Fulton, the boy whose body was discovered Monday evening after he vanished Saturday from the steps of his home.

He was described by neighbours as a happy, upbeat child who enjoyed playing with the other children in the complex. He was looking forward to entering Grade 8 in the fall.

Neighbours planned to stage a vigil at the complex yesterday night.

Sgt. Rob Vermeulen said Noyes was not considered "historically violent."

But in issuing the public warning yesterday morning, he said she "does pose a threat to herself and possibly others due to her diagnosed state of mental health."

Mounties said it's too early to discuss how the child died. THE CANADIAN PRESS

HANDOUT/THE CANADIAN PRESS

John Fulton, 12, who disappeared from his Grand Forks, B.C., home, has been found dead, and police say the case is being investigated as a homicide.

Doctors urge study of health-care competition

SASKATOON Canada's doctors are urging governments to look at the role competition could play in health care as they try to develop a new blueprint to help an ailing system.

Physicians at the Canadian Medical Association's annual meeting passed a resolution yesterday calling on governments and health authorities "to examine internal market mechanisms, which could include a role for the private sector in ... publicly funded health care."

85 The percentage of Canadian Medical Association delegates who voted to back a resolution to study competition within the public health-care system.

Association president Dr. Robert Ouellet said people should not be afraid of the word "competition."

"It's not the Wild West competition," he said. "We don't want to see that. It's managed competition that could be something good."

Ouellet has long argued that there could be a role for private health-care delivery within the public system, saying it could make the process more efficient and patient-focused. He says it's not about adopting an American-style system, but adapting the best ideas from European countries where such ideas are already in the works.

Eighty-five per cent of the 249 delegates eligible to vote backed the resolution to study competition, but there was much debate before the vote, and it didn't happen until "introduce" was replaced with "examine" in the wording.

Some delegates felt that competition could end up pitting doctor against doctor.

"I think this will serve to have us competing against each other, looking at patients as sources of revenue only," said Dr. Nanette Okun from Ontario.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Conference cancelled over flu fears

Aboriginal leaders at a reserve in northern Saskatchewan say they have cancelled a major North American conference on water because of the potential outbreak of influenza A (H1N1), also known as swine flu, CBC News Online reports. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Alleged victim doesn't remember attack

COURT A young Ontario girl who was allegedly kidnapped and sexually assaulted by a man in his 30s says she doesn't remember anything about the attack.

The girl, who is now 13, told a Peterborough, Ont., court yesterday that the last thing she remembers about that night in August 2008 was hanging out at a friend's house.

Next thing she remembers, she says, she was in the hospital.

Two of her friends have testified the alleged victim was severely intoxicated, saying the three of them drank a 26-ounce bottle of rum before running into the alleged attacker.

The victim testified yesterday that she doesn't remember drinking or doing drugs.

Thirty-three-year-old Stanley Tippett has pleaded not guilty to seven charges, including sexual assault and kidnapping.

The girl's mom says her daughter isn't the same little girl since the attack, and no longer goes anywhere alone.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

CAW **Grand gesture**

FRANCIS VACHON/CP PHOTO

Ken Lewenza, CAW national president, gestures as he speaks during the opening address of the 9th Constitutional Convention of the CAW-TAC in Quebec yesterday. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Jones took out $12M, audit shows

Alleged Ponzi schemer Earl Jones personally withdrew more than $12.3 million from his company's account, says an audit of his records released yesterday.

Accounting firm RSM Richter, the interim receiver for Jones, says he took out almost $3 million in payments from his company as well as $593,000 for his children's schooling and other expenses, $169,000 for car purchases, and a sum of $497,000 that was later transferred to Bermuda.

Accused

- Between 100 and 150 investors have accused Jones of bilking them out of millions of dollars, while Quebec's financial securities regulator has alleged the amount could be as high as $50 million.

The report was released at the first meeting of Jones' creditors.

The auditor says Jones also appears to have cashed in his RRSPs, an insurance policy and investments earlier this year.

The sums withdrawn were likely higher than $12.3 million, according to the auditor. That figure does not include transfers before 1987.

Bankruptcy trustee Gilles Robillard also says banking records can't be found for the years 2000 to 2008.

Jones, of Montreal, has been charged with four counts each of fraud and theft and has been ordered to appear in court Sept. 28.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

News in brief

VIOLENCE The leader of a British Columbia Indian band who was shot in the face with a BB gun during an altercation with a sport fisherman says he's worried the incident might trigger further violence on the water. Chief Willie Charlie was fishing Sunday when police say his net became entangled with a boat operated by a sport fisherman, who then shot Charlie. The chief was treated for a minor laceration.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Light plane crash leaves two dead

Two men died in a light plane crash south of Saskatoon. The wreck was found in a field yesterday. The victims were 28 and 56 years old. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Combining GST, PST tough sell: Premier

Premier Dalton McGuinty is acknowledging he's got a tough sales job ahead after his pitch for a harmonized sales tax was met with stony silence by municipal leaders.

McGuinty told the annual conference of the Association of Ontario Municipalities that combining the federal GST and the provincial sales tax is good for business and the right thing to do.

He noted that single sales taxes are "a fact of life" in 130 countries and four Canadian provinces — adding that anywhere sales taxes have been harmonized the decision has never been reversed. He apparently forgot Saskatchewan's short-lived and unpopular experiment with a combined sales tax in 1991.

Dalton McGuinty

While parts of McGuinty's 17-minute speech were greeted with warm applause by Ontario's mayors, the crowd sat on its hands throughout his sales tax appeal. Municipal leaders are worried they'll be hard hit next year by a harmonized sales tax that applies to more goods and services than the current Ontario PST.

The premier later acknowledged to reporters that he doesn't expect Ontarians to openly sing the policy change's praises.

British Columbia has also recently agreed to harmonize sales taxes with Ottawa next July 1, joining three Atlantic provinces and Quebec, which administers a parallel tax system.

McGuinty flatly rejected a suggestion that the harmonized tax might be an easier sell if Queen's Park reduced the provincial take from its current eight per cent.

"Can't afford it — it's as simple as that," said the premier.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Choppers fail endurance test

CONTRACT The Canadian officer who will oversee the first flights of Canada's new fleet of navy helicopters next year says the choppers currently can't pass an endurance test that requires them to fly for nearly three hours in extreme conditions.

"It (the helicopter) falls short of the endurance requirement as allowed under the revised contract," Col. Sam Michaud, commander of Nova Scotia's 12 Wing Shearwater airbase, said yesterday.

Original contract

- The MH-92 Cyclone helicopter's original contract had specified 28 choppers be delivered — one per month, beginning in November 2008.

The revised contract announced last year allowed for the delivery of the MH-92 Cyclone helicopters to begin in November 2010, two years behind schedule. It also doesn't require the choppers to meet the 170-minute flying time until after the 19th helicopter has been delivered in 2012.

But Michaud said he's confident the Cyclones will satisfy the requirement, and the aging fleet of Sea King helicopters can keep operating until then.

Still, he acknowledges there will be some limits — such as shorter missions and the need to use more helicopters to perform the same mission — until the endurance requirement is met.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Dissident, president and Nobel winner Kim Dae-jung dead

Former South Korean President Kim Dae-jung, who spent years as a dissident under the country's military dictatorship and later won the Nobel Peace Prize for seeking reconciliation with communist North Korea, has died. He was 85. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

World

TV's Novak dies

Political columnist Robert Novak, a diehard conservative and pugilistic debater who appeared regularly on television, has died in Washington, D.C., after a battle with brain cancer. He was 78. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Israel halting settlements?

Is Israel trying to cool a rare public disagreement with the United States?

Reports say Israel has quietly moved to halt new housing projects in the West Bank.

Outwardly, however, it is still rebuffing U.S. pressure to stop construction, say officials, peace activists and settlers.

It isn't the full settlement freeze the U.S. has been demanding, and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office issued a denial. But it indicates Israel is definitely seeking a compromise.

The government has issued no new construction permits for months.

Kobi Bleich, a spokesperson for Housing Minister Ariel Atias — the official directly responsible — would not confirm or deny the reports.

Palestinians say Israeli settlement construction is strangling the West Bank, which they want for their eventual state along with the Gaza Strip, and east Jerusalem.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Melting pot

- About 300,000 Israelis in the West Bank live among 2.5 million Palestinians.
- 180,000 Israelis live in east Jerusalem neighbourhoods built since Israel captured the Arab section in the 1967 war.

Rome **They're having a heatwave, too**

PIER PAOLO CITO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A girl cools off beside a fountain in Rome yesterday as the temperature headed toward 40 C. Officials issued a heatwave warning for nine cities in Italy.

News in brief

JAPAN Campaigning began yesterday in one of the most heated elections in Japan in more than a decade, with the party that has ruled the country almost continuously for 55 years trailing in polls. The polls indicate the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, which has 302 seats, will suffer a major defeat in the Aug. 30 elections.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

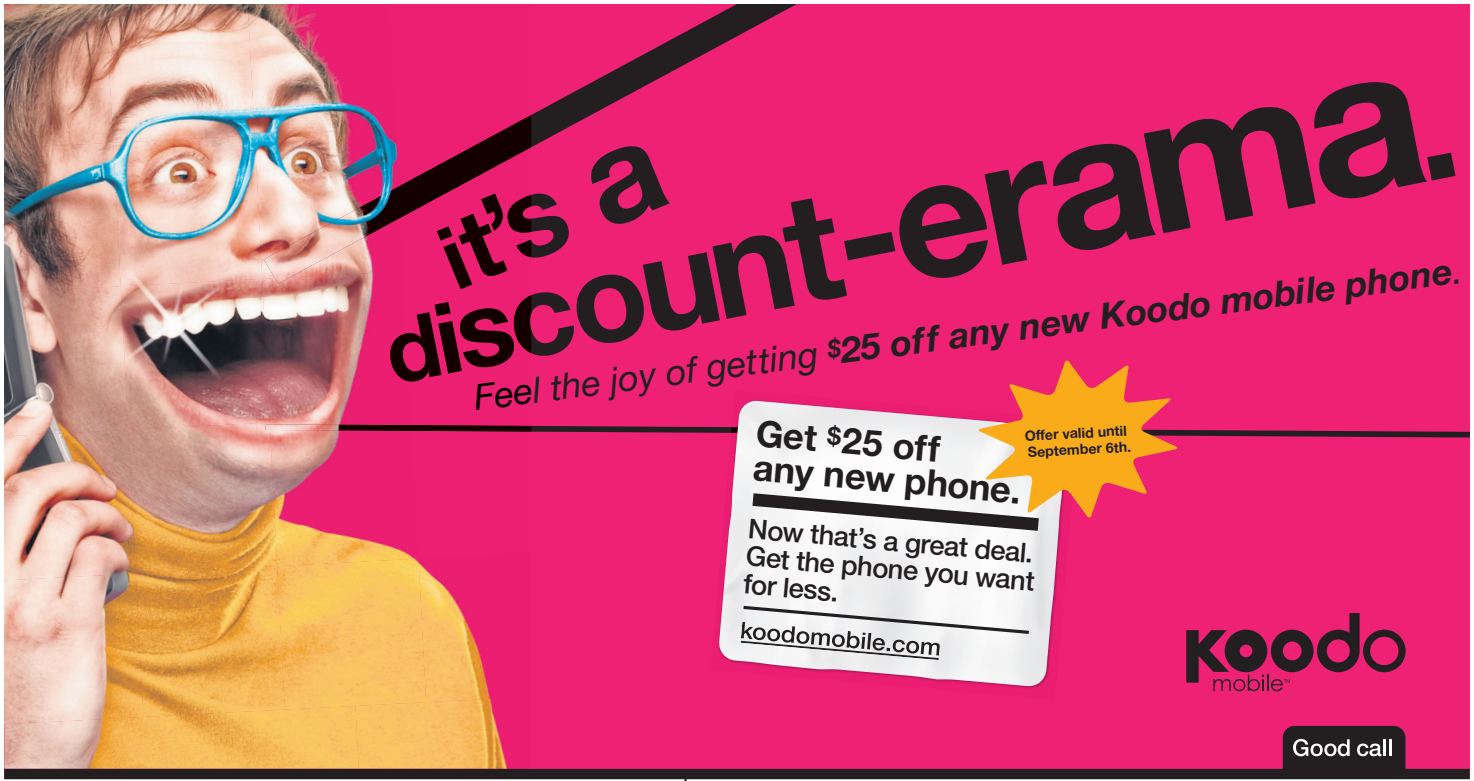
Russia holding 8 men accused of hijacking ship

FREIGHTER Russia's navy detained eight men accused of hijacking the Arctic Sea freighter near Sweden and forcing the crew to sail to West Africa, state news agencies quoted the defence minister as saying yesterday.

Anatoly Serdyukov reportedly said the suspected hijackers— citizens of Estonia, Latvia and Russia — were detained by a Russian naval ship without a shot being fired.

The Russian-crewed cargo ship was found Monday off Cape Verde, some 3,200 kilometres from the Algerian port where it was supposed to dock two weeks ago. The 15 Russian crew members were safe and were being questioned.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



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(1) No purchase necessary. Contest ends October 1, 2009. See buildabash.ca for Contest Rules.

BUILD-A-BASH AND WIN![1] Enter PTTIUO5 at buildabash.ca for points towards a koodo-rific party.

Flash floods kill 27 in Pakistan
The United Nations says at least 27 people have died in flash floods caused by heavy rains in northwestern Pakistan. About 80,000 people are affected in Mardan and Swabi districts. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Afghan-Canadian has high hopes for election

Tooryalai Wesa knows all too well the dangers of being a politician in Afghanistan.

The Afghan-Canadian, who has returned to his homeland to take up duties as the governor of Kandahar province, was sitting in his office when suicide bombers attacked the gate of the sprawling governor's palace in April.

He admits the security situation is a problem: "Some days are good, some days are bad," he says.

But Wesa is optimistic about tomorrow's presidential and provincial council elections, in which he'll cast his first-ever ballot in Afghanistan.

"I'm thrilled about it. I think it will be a wonderful day," he says.

But Taliban insurgents are already casting a shadow over the upcoming vote, threatening death to those who go to the polls.

"Some days are good, some days are bad."
Tooryalai Wesa

Posters plastered throughout Kandahar warn that people who participate will "fall prey to our tactics."

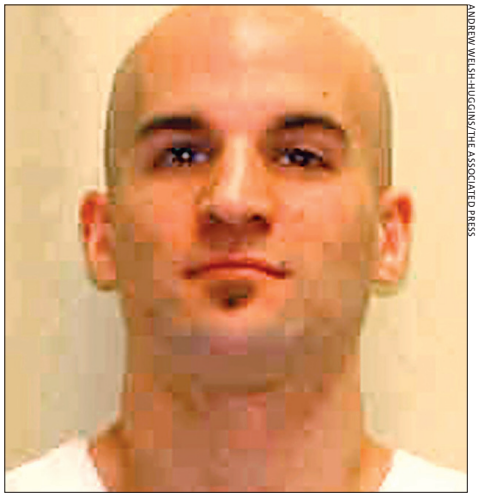
But Wesa says Afghans know too well that the Taliban is not in any position to run a country.

"They will be busy with these sporadic ambushes, sporadic shootings … assassinations," he says.

Meanwhile, a Taliban suicide bomber attacked a NATO convoy near Kabul yesterday, killing at least seven people and wounding more than 50. Two U.S. soldiers were killed in a separate blast. THE CANADIAN PRESS

MURRAY BREWSTER/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Tooryalai Wesa is thrilled to be able to vote for the first time in Afghanistan.


ANDREW WELSH-HUGGINS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jason Getsy, 33, was executed by lethal injection in Ohio yesterday for a triggerman-for-hire killing.

Assassin's final words: 'I am sorry'

EXECUTION Ohio yesterday executed a murder-for-hire triggerman for killing the mother of his intended target — who lay severely wounded nearby as his mother died.

Jason Getsy, 33, was pronounced dead at 10:29 a.m. after a lethal injection in the death chamber at the Southern Ohio Correctional Institution in Lucasville.

Getsy was sentenced to die for fatally shooting Ann Serafino in a crime that targeted her son, Charles Serafino, in a dispute over a lawn care business. Charles Serafino was shot seven times but survived and witnessed Getsy's execution yesterday.

Getsy briefly addressed Charles Serafino and his sister, Nancy, who also witnessed, telling them it was his earnest prayer that God would grant them peace.

"Sleep my friend, sleep."
Saundra Cardillo

"I am sorry," he said. "It's a little word, I know, but it is true." Getsy also said that even lying where he was, he was blessed because of God's love.

Nancy Serafino said she believed Getsy's apology was genuine. Her brother had a harsher assessment.

"It's too little, too late," Charles Serafino said. "He's never taken responsibility for what he did."

"Sleep my friend, sleep," said Saundra Cardillo, the wife of Getsy's spiritual adviser. THE CANADIAN PRESS

News in brief

AUTOS Ford says its future electric cars will "talk" to power grids across the U.S. The automaker is releasing details of a collaboration with utility companies on a system that allows car owners to program when to charge the vehicle, how long and at what utility rate. Ford and the utility companies are testing the system, which they say would not overtax the electric system should battery electric vehicles become mainstream. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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'Hope' draws reformists in Iran
Iran's top reformist leaders are all joining the Green Path of Hope, a political movement created to challenge the ruling system after a government crackdown crushed massive street protests. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

White House denies changing health-care tune

While some have accused the Obama administration of backing away from government health insurance in its health-care reform plans, the White House press secretary refuted such claims yesterday.

President Barack Obama and his health secretary, Kathleen Sebelius, downplayed the importance of the so-called public option in weekend remarks.

But yesterday, the White House press secretary disputed the notion that the administration has shifted its position in the face of a conservative uproar about Obama's health-care overhaul.

"I got to tell you, this is one of the more curious things I've ever seen in my life," said Robert Gibbs, who sparred bitterly with the White House press corps. "Nothing has changed. I mean, we can go out and say nothing has changed, but that seems sort of silly since nothing has changed."

Sebelius, for her part, blamed the media, despite telling CNN on Sunday that public health insurance was "not the essential element" in the administration's reform plans.

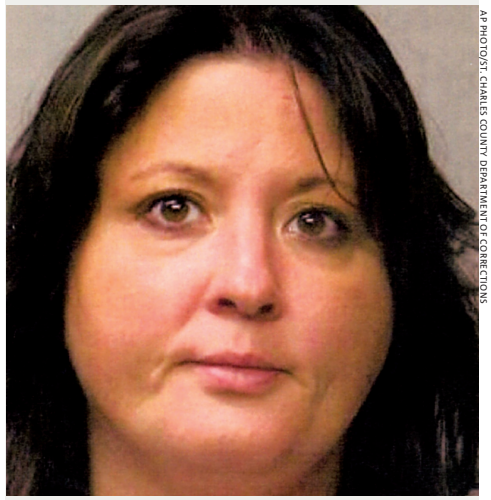
"Sunday must have been a slow news day because ... absolutely nothing has changed," she said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Sweeping reform

- The reform plans aim, in part, to help as many as 50 million uninsured Americans finally get coverage.

Missouri Cyberbullying charge



AP PHOTO/ST. CHARLES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Elizabeth A. Thrasher, 40, is shown in this photo, released yesterday. She's been charged with cyberbullying for allegedly posting a teenage girl's photo and personal information on Craigslist. Prosecutors say the posting's language suggested the 17-year-old girl was seeking a sexual encounter. They add the girl is the daughter of Thrasher's ex-husband's girlfriend.

Bomber could be released

COURT A Scottish court yesterday allowed the Lockerbie bomber to drop an appeal against his conviction — a step that could lead to the Libyan man's possible release or transfer to a prison in his homeland.

Libya wants Abdel Baset al-Megrahi sent home, but U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has urged Scotland to keep him in prison to serve out his 27-year sentence. Seven U.S. senators — including Edward Kennedy and John Kerry — also wrote to Scottish Justice Minister Kenny MacAskill with a similar request.

Al-Megrahi, 57, was convicted in 2001 of taking part in the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 on Dec. 21, 1988.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Comment

Fear our Arctic strength

TheWestView

You probably don't lie awake at night worrying about Canada's claim to Arctic sovereignty, but the Prime Minister appears to be tossing and turning over the future of the True North Strong and Free.

One of the How About That? consequences of global warming is that the polar ice cap is melting three times faster than previously thought, and that means sea routes such as the Northwest Passage could be ice free, at least part of the year, as early as 2015.

This new access puts the top of the world back on the map. Former Arctic wastes now have commercial value as access to vast oil and mineral reserves, not to mention commercial shipping routes improves. Taking the Northwest Passage from Japan to Northern Europe cuts 5,000 miles off the commute.

Thanks to all this melting, we are subject to the spectacle — I don't know what else to call it — of the highest Canadian government officials trooping to remote Arctic outposts and ordering up raw seal for lunch.

Prime Minister Harper, who is probably not even comfortable at a Calgary Stampede BBQ, is manfully choking down seal and shaking his fist at the European Union ban on products from the annual traditional seal hunt, which also plays well up north.

Stephen Harper

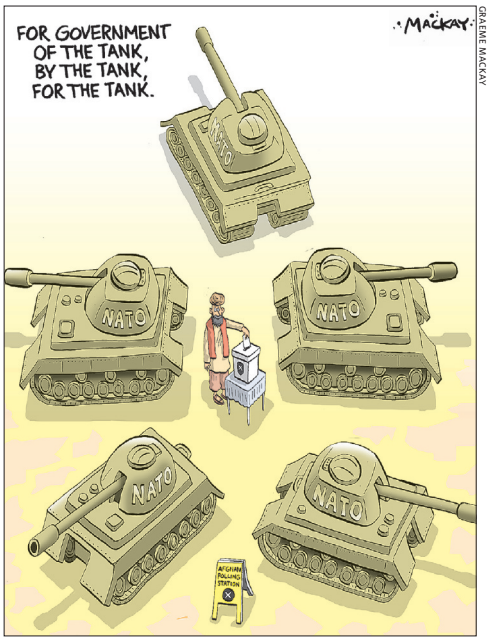
At the same time, he is doing his best to protect Canadian sovereignty by making announcements, which is sure to cause our Arctic competitors (USA, Russia, Denmark and Norway) to quake in their furlined boots. Defense Minister Peter MacKay officially launched our first northern military reserve Monday, vowing to bring it to full strength by 2019. Full strength, by the way, is 100 not-so-warm bodies.

Once their knees stop stinging from all that hearty knee-slapping, our northern competitors will have to stifle further laughter as the PM is scheduled to board the HMCS Toronto today to observe Operation Nanook, in which the Canadian navy pretends to look for Russian and U.S. ultra-sophisticated, stealthy nuclear subs that currently patrol our arctic waters with impunity.

And if none of the above doesn't force them to admit that Canada is Lord of the North, Mr. Harper also announced the new HQ for the Canadian Northern Economic Development or CanNor, will be in Iqaluit, with satellite offices in Yellowknife and Whitehorse — an announcement the competition Can-Ignore.

Do I have to point out the obvious? If we're really serious about asserting sovereignty over the North, especially that sketchy passage through the Parry Channel, we'll have to do better than order seal sushi for lunch and issue a couple of press releases. Even if they discover a nest of beavers at the North Pole, the best we can ever expect to do is maintain sovereignty as proxies for the Americans. And that's the True North.

Paul Sullivan is a Vancouver-based journalist and owner of Sullivan Media Consulting; vancouverletters@metronews.ca.



GRAEME MACKAY

Word on the street: If Michael Vick was on your favourite sports team, would you cheer for him?

Matt Morris
age 23, Toronto
A: No. I wouldn't cheer for him ... Everytime I see him, I'm gonna be thinking of these deathly, disgusting images of these poor animals.

Jennifer Fischer
age 23, Toronto
A: No ... Just because of what he's done to animals, and his position on animal rights ... It's cruelty to animals.

Ruslan Babayev
age 39, Toronto
A: We shouldn't shut the gate on people because everyone makes mistakes. Life is colourful. Sometimes it's dark, sometimes it's bright.

Aaron Rehel
age 23, Ottawa
A: Yes, I would. I think that a lot of people have blown this situation out of proportion.

Colin Robertson
age 54, Ottawa
A: I believe in redemption. What he did was terrible, but everyone makes mistakes and deserves another chance. He was a great football player.

Lindsay Hicks
age 25, Halifax, N.S.
A: No. I am an animal lover. To have dogs fight for sport is inhumane and cruel.

Worth mentioning

B.C. RCMP trading tattoo removal for information

The RCMP says it wants to help former gang members in B.C. leave their lifestyle by paying for them to remove gang-affiliated tattoos.

Sgt. Shinder Kirk of the B.C. Integrated Gang Task Force says that in exchange, police want information to combat gangs.

He says such co-operation will ensure people are serious about cutting their ties to gangs, which often require identifying marks such as tattoos.

Kirk wouldn't say how many former gangsters have taken part in the program to have tattoos removed by a laser through a police program that's modelled after several in the U.S. but is the first of its kind in Canada.

Former gang member Amir Javid says he welcomes the idea but doesn't think people should have to rat out their former gang to get their tattoos removed.

Javid, who runs a program called Real World Truth to reach out to at-risk youth, gang members and prisoners, says he'd like his tattoos gone, but wouldn't provide any information to police to make that happen.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Real World Truth

- The Real World Truth program aims to empower at-risk youth through awareness, education and community involvement to resist gang/drug-related activities and become community leaders in the future.

Metro Online Poll Results

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China buying $41 billion worth of natural gas from Australia

Chinese energy giant PetroChina Co. signed a deal yesterday to buy $41 billion US worth of Australian liquefied natural gas over the next 20 years, Australia's government said. The deal comes despite growing tensions between the two countries. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Business

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EDITOR: FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

Business in brief

AEROSPACE Bombardier Inc. faces a long road to recovery in the business jet market with no material rebound until 2012, an aerospace analyst said yesterday. Cameron Doerksen of Versant Partners said the aerospace segment earnings of the Montreal-based company will remain depressed for the next year or so, eliminating any need to rush out to purchase its stock.

AUTOS General Motors Co. will announce increased hours at several factories due to rising sales from the U.S. government's Cash for Clunkers program. The clunkers program offers up to $4,500 to people who trade older, inefficient vehicles for new, more efficient models. Ford Motor, Honda, Toyota, Hyundai and Chrysler all have announced production increases due to the program. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Shortage of iPhones

Rogers says stores sold out since early July

The iPhone 3GS is out of stock at a majority of Rogers and Fido retail stores across the country since early July and it's also sold out online, said Rogers Wireless spokeswoman Carly Suppa.

"Rogers has placed orders for continuous shipments of inventory and backorders will be filled on a priority basis," she said yesterday.

Rogers is the exclusive carrier of the iPhone in Canada and it has the only network at this time capable of running the touch-screen smartphone.

Suppa said Rogers has sold "tens of thousands" of the iPhone 3GS, starting at $199, since it was launched in June.

The older 3G iPhone, now priced at $99 on a three-year plan, is sold out online too, but may be available at retail stores across Canada, Suppa said.

The iPhone was first launched in Canada in July 2008 and is known for popularizing software applications like maps, games and weather.

Apple is competing with BlackBerry maker Research In Motion for consumers' wallets in North America.

IDC analyst Kevin Restivo said the iPhone 3GS has been in short supply for at least the last six weeks in Canada.

Restivo said the iPhone has helped open up the smartphone market to consumers. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Storms won't hit gas price: Analyst

GASOLINE The mere hint of a hurricane hitting the U.S. Gulf Coast is usually enough to send pump prices upward. But En-Pro International's petroleum analyst Roger McKnight says consumers won't likely see higher gas prices this fall — and they have the recession to thank.

He says prices this year should fall "dramatically" after the Labour Day weekend, barring any refinery outages. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Recession over but higher taxes inevitable, IMF warns

ECONOMY The International Monetary Fund is declaring the worst global recession since the Second World War over, but warns that the recovery will be sluggish and hard choices — including higher taxes — will be necessary to sustain the economic rebound.

In an article to be published today, the IMF's chief economist Olivier Blanchard says the recession has drained government treasuries to such an extent that "in nearly all countries ... higher taxation is inevitable."

The assessment echoes the Bank of Canada's latest outlook in July, but the view that governments will have to raise taxes flies in the face of the public assurances of Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Finance Minister Jim Flaherty. Both have insisted economic growth alone will be sufficient to eliminate the deficit. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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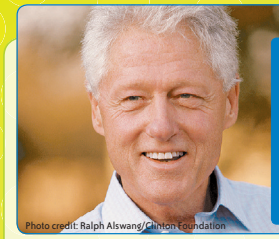

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ADVANCING GENERICS

Aussie company buys remaining Alcan divisions
Australian packaging company Amcor has offered to buy remaining Alcan Packaging divisions from Rio Tinto for $2.025 billion US, the global mining giant said yesterday. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Home Depot profits fall on housing weakness

Home Depot Inc. said yesterday its fiscal second-quarter profit fell seven per cent, as the nation's biggest home-improvement retailer shuttered its Expo business and continued to be pinched by the recession.

Still, the Atlanta-based company's adjusted results beat Wall Street's expectations, and it lifted its guidance for full-year earnings from continuing operations.

Home Depot earned $1.12 billion, or 66 cents per share, for the period ended Aug. 2. That's down from $1.2 billion, or 71 cents per share, a year earlier.

"Concerns about the housing market, rising unemployment and softness in the overall economy continue to pressure consumers." CEO Frank Blake

Excluding Expo-related charges, profit was 67 cents per share, topping analysts' forecasts for 59 cents per share, according to Thomson Reuters. Home Depot had announced in January that it planned to close its 34 Expo Design Centers.

Quarterly results also included an approximately $50 million tax benefit related to a favourable foreign tax settlement. The tax benefited boosted earnings by about 3 cents per share.

"Concerns about the housing market, rising unemployment and softness in the overall economy continue to pressure consumers," chairman and CEO Frank Blake said in a statement.

Revenue dropped nine per cent to $19.07 billion from $21 billion, falling short of the $19.23 billion forecast of analysts polled. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Made in Canada cars?

AUTO The head of a Canadian automotive research group says now is the time to start producing cars in this country, especially with the industry in crisis.

Scott Paterson, director of Canada's Automobile Research and Technology Association, says there are about 20 companies capable of producing an original Canadian automobile.

Paterson says it would be ideal if Ontario-based Magna International Inc. and Quebec's Bombardier Inc. got together in a joint bilingual effort. That proposal and others will get a full airing during a full-day conference at the University of Ottawa today.

Paterson, who has been floating the project for two decades, says the government should be willing to invest in the project with the enthusiasm it has committed to bailing out General Motors and Chrysler. THE CANADIAN PRESS

IDC buys Comtech tech for US $2M

TV International Datacasting Corp, an Ottawa-area company that provides technical services to the satellite television industry, has acquired a number of product lines and related technology from Comtech Tiernan Video Inc. in a $2-million US cash deal.

Both the radio and television network product lines are being acquired by IDC, which will sell them on an exclusive basis.

IDC has acquired all intellectual property, trademarks, inventory, customer and vendor lists. THE CANADIAN PRESS

In brief

MINING Trelawney Mining and Exploration Inc. said yesterday it has entered into a definitive option agreement with Treelawn Investment Corp. to earn up to 70 per cent in mining claims in Chester Township, Ont. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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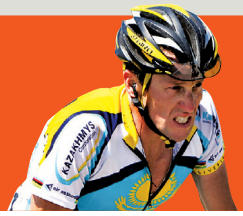
Bertuzzi joins Wings

Todd Bertuzzi is rejoining the Detroit Red Wings, signing a one-year deal with the team he played for at the end of the 2006-'07 season. Bertuzzi spent last year with the Calgary Flames, putting up 44 points (15-29) in 66 regular-season games. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Sports



Traffic stopper

Lance Armstrong, left, brought Scottish traffic to a standstill yesterday after more than 200 cyclists answered his Twitter invitation for a casual bike ride. The seven-time Tour de France winner issued the invitation while in Glasgow to watch Irish rockers U2 play Hampden Park. Armstrong is expected to compete in the Tour of Ireland next week. METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: CHRIS.CLEMENTS@METRONEWS.CA

Favre signs with Minnesota

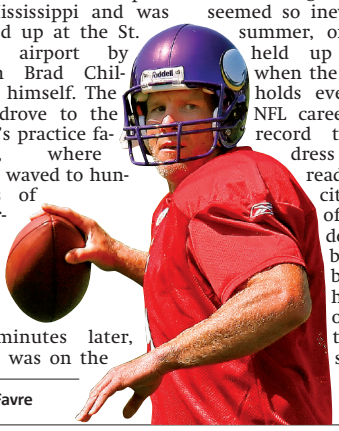
NFL Brett Favre's latest retirement lasted all of three weeks.

The three-time NFL MVP has done about-face for the second time in as many years and will play for the Minnesota Vikings this season.

If the wait for Favre's decision seemed never-ending, it was resolved yesterday in a few short hours: the 39-year-old jumped on a team plane in Mississippi and was picked up at the St. Paul airport by coach Brad Childress himself. The two drove to the team's practice facility, where Favre waved to hundreds of cheering fans.

No less than 90 minutes later, Favre was on the field in his familiar No. 4 jersey with purple shorts and a purple helmet, a vision that has had Packers fans cringing about for months. He shook hands with a few of his new teammates and quickly began throwing as fans peeked through the security fence to catch a glimpse of the superstar.

Shortly after practice began, the Vikings confirmed the agreement that seemed so inevitable all summer, only to be held up July 28 when the man who holds every major NFL career passing record told Childress he wasn't ready to play, citing a lack of confidence in his beat-up body to hold up over an entire season. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Brett Favre

Upsets reign at Rogers Cup

Venus Williams, Aleksandra Wozniak lose in opening round

Aleksandra Wozniak's quest to win a WTA Tour title in her home country will have to wait another year.

The Blainville, Que., native dropped a 6-4, 6-4 decision to Russia's Alisa Kleybanova in first-round action yesterday at the $2-million US Rogers Cup. Wozniak's loss means that none of the four Canadians in the main draw advanced to the second round.

Wozniak, ranked 40th in the world, came in with the highest hopes of them all. But the 21-year-old was broken three times in the first set, winning just 52 per cent of her first-serve points along the way.

Another service break put Kleybanova ahead 3-2 in the second set. After Wozniak broke to tie the game 3-3, the 36th-ranked Kleybanova returned the favour to go back up a break, sealing Wozniak's fate.

FRANK GUNN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Aleksandra Wozniak of Blainville, Que., hits a backhand to Alisa Kleybanova in Rogers Cup tennis action yesterday.

"She plays a really aggressive ball, and it was hard for me to change the direction like I wanted," said Wozniak. "I think she just stepped up on the easy, short balls that I was giving her. She was taking advantage."

No Canadian woman has won the Rogers Cup since Faye Urban beat countrywoman Vicki Berner in the 1969 final.

Earlier yesterday, unheralded Ukrainian Kateryna Bondarenko recorded the upset of the tournament thus far, knocking off third-seeded American Venus Williams 1-6, 7-5, 6-4 in a second-round stunner. Bondarenko, ranked 64th in the world, will now face either Agnes Szavay of Hungary or Agnieszka Radwanska of Poland in the third round.

"I was playing really good," said Bondarenko. "The first set, I didn't know what to do with her power. The rest of the game, I just tried to keep the ball in play."

Williams arrived in Toronto as one of the favourites, despite not having played here since she was a 17-year-old in 1997. She leaves having never won a match at the Rogers Cup, dropping to 0-3 all-time. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Sports in brief

TENNIS Lleyton Hewitt rallied for a 2-6, 7-6 (8), 6-4 win over No. 12 Robin Soderling yesterday at the Cincinatti Open. No. 11 Fernando Verdasco of Spain also lost, and No. 10 Fernando Gonzalez of Chile quit in the first set of his match because of a sore knee.

SOCCER Chelsea earned a 3-1 road win over Sunderland while promoted Wolves captured a 1-0 victory at Wigan in the English Premier League yesterday.

TRACK A recent study by researchers at Tilburg University in the Netherlands predicts that someone will eventually be able to break the tape in the 100-metre sprint with a time of 9.51 seconds. But British bookmakers are betting that Usain Bolt will better that mark. As of yesterday, Ladbrokes is giving 3-1 odds that the 22-year-old will run under 9.5 seconds by the end of September.

OLYMPICS IOC president Jacques Rogge plans to resign as an active member of the Olympic committee after his final presidential term ends in 2013, preferring to serve as an "honorary president."

BASEBALL A day after agreeing with No. 1 draft pick Stephen Strasburg on a record-breaking contract, acting Washington Nationals GM Mike Rizzo says it's "very unlikely" Strasburg will be called up to the majors this season. METRO NEWS SERVICES

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Pudge headed back to Texas

Ivan Rodriguez is returning to Texas after the Rangers traded for him yesterday. Pudge began his career with the team in 1991. METRO NEWS SERVICES

RENE JOHNSTON/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Toronto catcher Rod Barajas tries to make the play at home as David Ortiz of Boston Red Sox makes his own call last night at the Rogers Center. Ortiz was safe on the play.

Jays rally falls short

The Toronto Blue Jays erased deficit after deficit on a rare productive night at the plate, only to watch it all get thrown away.

The shaky Boston Red Sox capitalized on Casey Janssen's errant toss to score three times in the top of the eighth, then survived a big scare in bottom of the inning to steady themselves with a messy 10-9 victory last night.

MLB RESULTS

Boston 10 **Toronto** 9

AT

No lead was safe before a crowd of 25,472, with the pitchers having an especially miserable time on a steamy and sticky night.

Things were tied 7-7 when Janssen (2-4) opened the eighth by walking David Ortiz and surrendering a single to Nick Green. Alex Gonzalez then laid down a poor sacrifice bunt right to the pitcher's mound and Janssen would easily have had the lead runner at third but bobbled the ball after it took a strange bounce.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Sports in brief

GOLF The game of golf contributed $11.3 billion to the Canadian economy in 2008, according to a new study by the Strategic Networks Group. The study measured all goods and services related to the game and found that golf accounted for roughly .009 per cent of the country's $1.2-trillion gross domestic product.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE A fluke by William Gallas and an own goal by Gary Caldwell gave Arsenal a healthy 2-0 victory at Celtic and one foot in the lucrative Champions League group stage yesterday.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Argos kicker wins weekly award

CFL Toronto Argonauts kicker Justin Medlock was a unanimous pick for the CFL's special-teams player of the week award. Medlock had a club record-tying seven field goals in the Argos' 36-28 home loss to the B.C. Lions.

A career milestone earned Calgary Stampeders receiver Jeremaine Copeland the CFL's offensive honours.

Copeland earned the honour after recording a career-best 11 catches for 182 yards and two touchdowns in a 38-35 loss to the Edmonton Eskimos.

Saskatchewan Roughriders defensive end John Chick was a unanimous pick as top defensive player. Chick had two sacks and a forced fumble in the Riders 33-23 home win over the Hamilton Tiger-Cats.

Lions slotback Paris Jackson was named the top Canadian for the second time this season. He had six catches for 122 yards and two TDs in helping B.C. rally for its win over Toronto.

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No more tenure?

An opinion piece in the Chronicle of Higher Education argues that tenure-track positions at U.S. colleges face extinction in a war of attrition. Deans faced with shrinking budgets will likely be replacing tenured faculty members with adjuncts — particularly in humanities and social science departments. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Workology

Home-schooling trend in U.S.?

Although Academica Group's UCAS applicant study continues to find very few PSE-bound students have been home-schooled in Canada, in the U.S. it is estimated that somewhere between three and six per cent of the school-aged population are being home-schooled. The primary driver is religion for 83 per cent of home-schooling Americans, who feel their local public schools are "unwholesome" in some way. ACADEMICA GROUP

EDITOR: DOUGLAS.DUNLOP@METRONEWS.CA

Women knocked from top: Study

Top-level employees still hirable, mobile, but more women losing their job than men

MAT LECOMPTE
for Metro Canada

"Decisions need to be made to fix the barriers women face. Networks need to be put in place for women to acquire role models and mentors so they can advance within their organizations."
Catalyst Vice-President Deborah Gillis

You know how bad the economy is these days, so you don't want to read about it again. However, depending on your education and employment potential, these horror stories may merely be myths.

A recent report released by Catalyst, an international organization focused on working with businesses to create inclusive workplaces, indicates that over 50 per cent of "high potential" employees were actually able to advance their careers in this recessionary period. The data found that these people remained employable, mobile and in high demand from various employers around the world.

"The report showed us that there are a number of myths surrounding the current economic crisis," said Deborah Gillis, North American vice-president of Catalyst. "Top-level employees, for the most part, are still hireable and mobile."

The numbers were reached by analyzing information collected from over 800 MBA alumni from 26 leading business schools spanning across continents — including Asia, Europe and North America. The responding alumni graduated between 1996 and 2007.

In fact, the research shows that only 10 per cent of respondents reported losing their jobs due to downsizing or closure.

Of that 10 per cent, however, women executives were three-times more likely to lose their jobs than their male counterparts. While six per cent of male senior employees lost their jobs because of downsizing, a substantial 19 per cent of high-ranking women employees suffered the same fate.

Gillis explains that because of a lack of mentors, role models, connections and networks, women are more likely than men to be laid off. This is because men, who have traditionally outnumbered women in senior positions, have established networks to keep them on board.

"Decisions need to be made to fix the barriers women face," she said. "Networks need to be put in place for women to acquire role models and mentors so they can advance within their organizations."

Based on this, it appears that as more women acquire senior positions, these networks will be created and strengthened.

The data in the report is focused on the time period between November 2007 and June 2009.

Because men for so long outnumbered women in higher-up positions, the networks they were able to create have helped them weather the recession storm and caused them to be kept on at a higher rate than their female counterparts.

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Albertans getting more financial aid too
Like their Ontario counterparts, more and more post-secondary students in Alberta are seeking loans, grants, and bursaries to pay for their education due to the economic downturn and few employment opportunities this summer. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Caplan followed family's footsteps

Despite current eHealth storm, MPP doesn't regret getting into politics

CHRIS ATCHISON
for Metro Canada

Many parents expect their children to follow in their career footsteps — not so in David Caplan's household.

Caplan, the MPP for Don Valley East and Ontario's Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, was the vice-president of a successful recycling firm in 1991 when he was urged to run for a seat on the North York Board of Education. Having grown up immersed in politics — his mother Elinor served as a cabinet minister under former prime minister Jean Chrétien, while his father, Wilfred, unsuccessfully contended for a seat in the Ontario legislature in 1977 — Caplan was well-versed in the minutiae of political campaigns. Having witnessed his mother's tireless work first-hand, he also understood the time commitment required of any politician.

"I think (my parents) understood the sacrifices that you make going into public life as far as family life, some of the privacy and a number of issues like that," Caplan says. "They were surprised that I would choose to go into political life."

Surprised but supportive, Caplan's parents helped their son progress in his political career, until he eventually succeeded his mother as MPP for the riding of Oriole in 1997 after she resigned the seat to run federally. Caplan then upset incumbent Minister of Education David Johnson in the 1999 election to take the new riding of Don Valley East, created when the Harris government passed a bill to reduce the number of MPPs from 130 to 103.

Caplan credits his early political success to his parents' sage advice: "They told me that in everything that you do, make sure that you develop a good reputation, that you're doing this for the right reasons," he recalls. "The other advice was to follow your instincts. Everyone in public life has advice for you, but if my instincts tell me it's the right thing to do, I follow it."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICES
MPP David Caplan is seen here with Premier Dalton McGuinty after being giving the Ontario Minister of Health and Long-Term Care cabinet position.

Caplan retained his seat in the 2003 provincial election and was named Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal where he presided over a new infrastructure plan for the province and weathered a scandal involving one of his files, the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation, when investigations found that a disproportionate number of lotto retailers were winning jackpots. In his current post as Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, Caplan has fought to reduce patient wait times and modernize the system, but had to navigate stormy political waters yet again when it was discovered that a number of consultant contracts for eHealth Ontario — the province's initiative to digitize patient health records — were improperly awarded by then eHealth Ontario CEO Sarah Kramer.

Caplan admits scandals such as these take their toll, but he says that in retrospect, he has no regrets about choosing a life in politics.

"What I'm reminded of is not only the things I've done, but also the things I want to do and accomplish," he says of strategies to cope with both the highs and lows of such a high-profile career. "But I'm always reminded my time here is temporary. There is a legacy and there will be a future, as well. It's something we should all remember."

Check Metronews.ca/work for feature pieces on Ontario NDP Leader Andrea Horwath and PC MPP Frank Klees. Both stories ran earlier this week.

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No case for mental distress from work

WorkplaceLaw

Daniel Lublin

Metronews.ca/workplacelaw

Mental suffering at work may be real — but that doesn't necessarily amount to a successful lawsuit.

Having just been denied a promotion at work, Maria Amaral was crestfallen. As an employee of the Canadian Musical Reproduction Rights Agency for 23 years, Amaral thought that she should have been promoted to manager. But her boss, Caroline Rioux, thought otherwise. Shortly after the failed promotion attempt, Amaral refused to write a letter when Rioux directed her to. She was disciplined. Dejected, she let her attendance and performance dwindle. Rioux continued to warn Amaral, and eventually the agency relieved her of some of her duties. But Amaral's absenteeism and performance worsened. The agency placed Amaral on probation and planned for her eventual dismissal.

Two days later, Amaral suffered a serious mental breakdown, believing the agency wanted her to leave, and never returned to work. Her next contact with the agency was through her lawyer, suing the agency, its president, vice-president and her boss, Rioux, for the considerable damages flowing from her breakdown, claiming that they deliberately or negligently inflicted mental suffering on her.

Finding that the agency and its employees were not responsible for Amaral's breakdown, Justice Ruth Mesbur concluded that no one could have foreseen Amaral's reaction. More importantly, however, the court confirmed that the threshold to find employers liable for psychiatric damage suffered by employees is significant: The employer's conduct must be extreme, flagrant or outrageous and calculated to deliberately impose harm. Recently, the Ontario Court of Appeal agreed — dismissing Amaral's appeal.

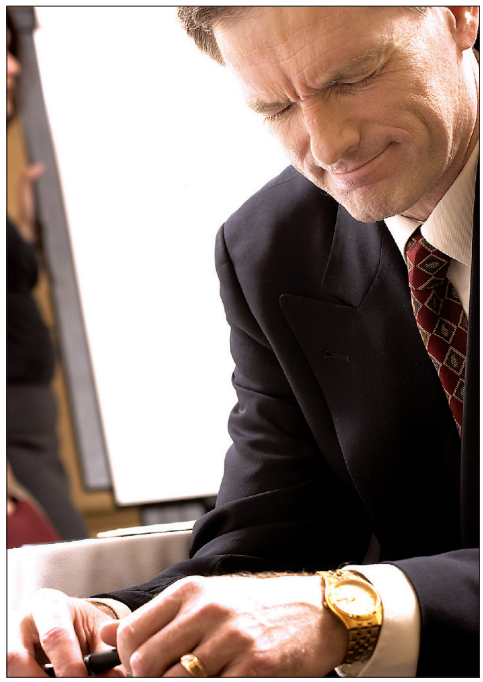
Following several high-profile Canadian judgments for harassment and mental suffering, employees' lawyers have been adding zeros to their precedents, claiming perceived mistreatment equates to a significant lawsuit. But workplace law doesn't provide compensation for any stress suffered by employees at the hands of their employer — the conduct complained of must be objectively intolerable in the eyes of the judge, not just the plaintiff.

Employees should follow the lessons from this case very closely or risk being the author of their own misfortune:

• Management may be demanding, unsympathetic or even insensitive, but that alone does not afford employees the right to launch a considerable lawsuit or render the company liable for inflicting mental distress. Even had Amaral's allegations been proven, they were not sufficiently offensive to merit the damage award she sought.

• There is not a legal remedy for every case of workplace distress. The unfortunate counsel I sometimes provide is to seek another job rather than remain profoundly unhappy with the current conditions.

• Consider a negotiated resolution to a claim instead of steadfastly marching to the courtroom doors. Had Amaral heeded this advice, she would have been cashing settlement cheques now rather than having to pay considerable legal costs to her former employer.



Management may be unsympathetic or even insensitive, but that does not afford employees the right to launch a lawsuit

Daniel A. Lublin is an employment lawyer focusing on the law of dismissal; dan@toronto-employmentlawyer.com.

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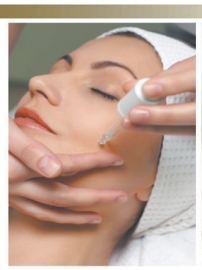
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Former uRegina student fined $18,000 for residence flooding
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Workplace survivors need to communicate

You've been spared the axe and escaped the latest round of layoffs at your office, so you can breathe easier, right?

Not necessarily.

As companies scale back in this turbulent economy, employees who remain often shoulder added responsibilities and heavier workloads to compensate for others who have been let go. That can lead to longer hours and higher stress levels — or worse.

Nora Spinks is president of Work-Life Harmony, a Toronto-based international research and consulting firm that helps employers with workplace policies, practices, benefits and leadership development.

At Health and Safety Canada 2009, a conference and trade show hosted by the Industrial Accident Prevention Association in Toronto this spring, Spinks led a workshop called Workload Unplugged: Strategies for the Overworked, Overwhelmed and Overloaded.

Spinks said when it comes to workplace survivors trying to stay afloat, it's all about keeping perspective and a positive attitude. She acknowledges that can be "really difficult to do when you feel like you're just drowning."

For those feeling overwhelmed, Spinks said it's important they know they probably have more negotiating power than they believe.

For example, rather than simply agreeing to take on the work of three people, she suggests first asking a lot of open-ended questions of superiors.

"Instead of asking, 'How do I do that?' phrase it as in 'Tell me how to,' because they can't walk away from that or they can't say, 'You figure it out,'" Spinks said.

"You're communicating that you're taking this seriously, that you're willing to say, 'I'm up for this' and 'There's only 24 hours in a day' and 'I'm not prepared to give up my health, my well-being, my relationships for this job' without being rude or disrespectful to your boss or your co-workers," she added.

While it's one thing to express concerns, Spinks said employees shouldn't shy away from offering a concrete solution to a problem they're dealing with and asking for permission to carry it out to make their work-life balance more manageable.

Spinks said the worst thing to do is stay silent out of fear you'll be identified as a complainer or be the next one to be laid off.

Above all, Spinks said maintaining open dialogue between management and employees is among the fundamentals to solving problems and ultimately achieving success.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Advice from a career guru

- Career advice guru Barbara Moses said workers need to understand and communicate to their employer that employees putting out 150 per cent are going to burn out and "end up an empty shell" doing 10 per cent of the work.

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Porsche 911 Turbo coming
Porsche AG will present its new top-of-the-line 911 at the Frankfurt Auto Show in September. The Porsche 911 Turbo goes on sale in Canada in January 2010. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Metro Drive

Seatbelt's 50th

The three-point seatbelt turned 50 last weekend. On Aug. 13, 1959, the Volvo PV544 became the first car with the safety feature, which has been called one of the most significant inventions of the 20th century. METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: KUMAR SAHA, KUMAR.SAHA@METRONEWS.CA

The sounds of silence

2010 Chevrolet Equinox a quiet revolution for SUVs

JIL MCINTOSH
for Metro Canada

When a company debuts a new model, it sometimes brings along competitors' models for journalists to drive back-to-back. No one brings one that outshines the new model, so when GM introduced the all-new 2010 Chevrolet Equinox and rolled out a Toyota RAV4 and Honda CR-V for comparison, everyone took notice.

The verdict: This new Equinox gives GM the ability to stand solidly head-to-head in the crowded compact SUV market against its domestic and imported opponents.

Also trimmed and badged as the GMC Terrain, the Equinox is built in Ingersoll, Ont. The previous Equinox came only with a choice of two V6 engines, but for 2010, there are two new powerplants: a 2.4-litre four-cylinder or 3.0-litre V6, both with direct injection and mated to six-speed automatic transmissions. Both can be ordered in front-wheel-drive or with an all-wheel system that primarily runs the front wheels, but sends power to the rear if necessary. At a combined rating of 7.8 L/100 km, GM says the four-cylinder is class-leading for fuel economy.

The four-cylinder starts at $25,995 and runs to $33,460. The V6 is an extra $1,725 and only comes with 18-inch wheels priced at $325, so it's an extra $2,050 on each model. Those who need the V6's stronger towing capacity (1,500 lbs for the four; 3,500 lbs for the six) will probably step up, but for almost all other driving conditions, the 182-horsepower four-cylinder works well enough that the bigger engine's 264 horses are overkill. GM has also wisely made the four-cylinder available in all trim lines, so you don't need to order the V6 if you want the top-line LTZ's toys.

Most impressive is how quiet it is. It's been sound-deadened and sealed to within an inch of its life, but since smaller engines are inherently louder, the four-cylinder model adds an extra trick: Two cabin-mounted sensors that monitor interior sound and then, when necessary, send a wave from the subwoofer to offset any noise. It's similar to the way noise-cancelling headphones work, and it allows the engineers to run the engine at a lower rpm for improved fuel economy. I got into a Buick Enclave test vehicle a few days later that didn't seem any more silent than the Equinox.

Handling is responsive and nicely weighted, and it feels more like driving a car than an SUV, with no torque steer, minimal body sway, and a smooth ride over gravel roads and rough pavement.

The interior is also much improved over the old Equinox: There's a lot of hard plastic, but it's well-fitted and handsomely designed, and I don't remember any Chevrolet with seats this comfortable.

The Ingersoll, Ont.-built 2010 Chevy Equinox is available in both four cylinder and V6 engines.

The interior is much improved over the old Equinox: There's a lot of hard plastic, but it's well-fitted and handsomely designed.

2010 Chevy Equinox

Type: Sports utility vehicle
Price: from $25,995
Engine: 2.4-litre four-cylinder and 3.0-litre V6
HP: 184 (four-cylinder); 264 (V6)

Highlights

- Handles like sedan
- Improved interior
- Extremely quiet

The 2011 Infiniti M

2011 Infiniti M adds more power

NEW MODEL Infiniti recently provided an advanced look at the all-new 2011 Infiniti M performance luxury sedan at the 59th Annual Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance in Carmel, Calif.

This is the third generation of Infiniti's popular M and the first to be sold across all of Infiniti's 32 markets around the world.

Like the current M, the next-generation design will be offered with V8 and V6 engines.

The 2011 models will be designated the Infiniti M56 and Infiniti M37 respectively, reflecting their more powerful, larger displacement engines. The M56 V8 is expected to offer more than 400 horsepower.

The M also features a completely redesigned body, with authentic sports sedan proportions and evocative new styling with a low front end and deeply sculpted fenders inspired by the Infiniti Essence concept car.

The M, which is scheduled to go on sale across the world starting from spring 2010, was revealed through a unique "video mapping" process — in which a "virtual M" was created on a 3-D form.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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Avalon XLS on sale
The 2010 Toyota Avalon XLS went on sale across Canada last week. The company's flagship sedan starting at $39,285. METRO NEWS SERVICES

GETTY IMAGES

A charging bay at London's Berkeley Square. There are plenty of infrastructure hurdles to jump through before more drivers can adopt electric vehicles, columnist Michael Goetz says.

Plug in ... but where?

AutoPilot
Michael Goetz
metronews.ca/autopilot

If I ask, "What infrastructure might we need, to make it possible for a bunch of us to replace our gasoline-powered vehicles with pure electric vehicles?"

And you answer, "A bunch of really, really, long extension cords."

Well, that would make me think you're not taking this infrastructure thing seriously enough my friend.

OK, maybe you got more pressing concerns to worry about — like how to program your PVR so you don't miss any more episodes of Cubical Makeover.

Thankfully, there are a bunch of concerned citizens, consultants, governments, and eager business enterprises who have all been busy of late, envisioning that electric-car future. Let's take a quick look at what they're picturing, and worrying about:

- Charge stations with high-voltage power (400-600 volts), so "fill ups" can be done in minutes.
- Charge stations that will also allow payments by credit cards, and figure out how much to charge, based on the real time cost of electricity.
- The first wave of charge stations will be in city cores, and near bus, train, and subway stations. Charge stations on the prairies? Maybe later.
- Another or supplemental option is places where drained battery packs can be quickly exchanged for fully-charged packs. But for that to work we will need standardized battery packs.
- More electricity will be needed and it will have to be clean (wind, solar, wave, etc). Putting coal-generated electricity into vehicles will not make the carbon footprint go down a size.

"(Automakers) are leery about putting all their expensive R&D eggs in one basket, lest some other technology comes along and blows them out of the water."

You can see we've got a way to go yet. That's why some feel hybrids, will be very popular and necessary until we transition to an electrical future. They don't need that expensive infrastructure we talked about.

But surprisingly, governments here and around the world seem willing to invest in electrical infrastructure. California and Israel are well on their way, and there are big projects planned for Arizona and Oregon.

I think this is because they see it as more of their purvey, like garbage collection and the water supply. To them, hydrogen is just another fuel; so let the fuel companies worry about that.

Ontario recently initiated some incentives so that one out of every 20 vehicles driven in the province might be electrically-powered by 2020.

These incentives include customer rebates of up to $10,000 and the installation of charge spots at Ontario government and Toronto's Go Transit locations.

As usual, the automakers are not totally on board. They're leery about putting all their expensive R&D eggs in one basket, lest some other technology comes along and blows them out of the water.

For instance, someone might finally figure out how to capture all that methane produced by cattle flatulence. If that happens and all you're building is electrical motors, well, that would be a bummer.

Michael Goetz has been writing about cars and editing automotive publications for more than 20 years. He lives in Toronto with his family and a neglected 1967 Jaguar E-type.

Battle to go eco-friendly

EMMA E FORREST
Metro World News

Car manufacturers are all in the race to go eco these days, and now even the world's armies are getting in on the act.

Making military transport greener is a no-brainer — as a nation's economies suffer, their equipment needs to be more efficient and cheaper to run, despite the need for increasingly heavy armour to protect soldiers from new threats.

On a more basic note, fuel-efficiency is key when troops are deployed in remote destinations, and fuel needs to be shipped in. But even just fuelling the vehicles that fuel the tanks and fighting vehicles is a logistical nightmare, points out Paul Skalny, Director at the U.S. Army's Tank Automotive Research, Development and Engineering Center (TARDEC):

"In many cases, 70 per cent of the bulk tonnage we take to war is fuel. So anything we can do to increase the fuel efficiency of our platforms is critical."

Recently, TARDEC showed off a collection of eco-friendly military vehicles to California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, including a diesel-electric hybrid that gives the car up to six miles of silent mobility.

The U.S. Army isn't the only one to go eco, though, other forward-thinking armed forces are thinking ahead, teaming up with civilian companies to develop more ecologically — and economically — sound ways of transporting their troops. The British Army is funding projects that fit with its future visions, including reducing operational dependency on fossil fuels.

Out are the diesel-guzzling tank and jet fighter, in are vehicles with a hybrid drivetrain, and even solar-powered ones. The idea for the future protective vehicle is to make them more lightweight but as strong as current battle vehicles. And of course, hybrid tanks have the additional advantage of a silent and stealthy transit.

So eco-friendly military vehicles will be more efficient — and improve the safety of troops on the battlefield.

Green scene

The British Army is developing lightweight tanks that may feature a hybrid drivetrain, or even solar-powered engines.

Mazda readies lightweight MX-5

AUTO SHOW A superlight show car capturing the pure essence of the world's most popular roadster, the Mazda MX-5, will see its world premiere at the 63rd Frankfurt Motor Show, which will be held from 15 through 27 September 2009. Mazda will present a new take on its affordable roadster in an all-new show car, the Mazda MX-5 Superlight version, designed at Mazda's studio in Oberursel, Germany. The car will improve driving performance, handling, fuel economy and CO2 emissions. FROM CARGUIDE

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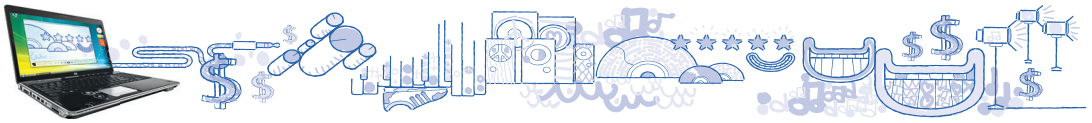

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Aveo 5-door LS model shown with PG9 and UE1††

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Cobalt SS Coupe model shown with 29U.††

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CITY: 8.7L/100KM – 33 MPG◊

COBALT GIVES YOU MORE

	2009 COBALT LT	2010 TOYOTA COROLLA CE BASE SEDAN MODEL	2009 HONDA CIVIC DX BASE SEDAN MODEL
LOWER CASH PRICE	$13,995	$15,260**	$16,990**
AIR CONDITIONING	✔	X	X
AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION	✔	X	X
16" ALUMINUM WHEELS	✔	X	X
REMOTE KEYLESS ENTRY	✔	X	X
POWER DOOR LOCKS	✔	X	X
HP / TORQUE	155 / 150	132 / 128	140 / 128
POWERTRAIN WARRANTY	5-year/160,000 km	5-year/100,000 km	5-year/100,000 km

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HEY MOM, DAD, I DON'T

Car auction record set
The championship-winning 1965 Shelby Daytona Cobra Coupe CSX2601 has sold at a California auction for $7.25 million US, setting the record for the highest price paid for an American car at public auction. CANADIANDRIVER.COM

Auto repairs take hit in 2009

Maintenance spending down: Study

In yet another example of consumer belt-tightening, Canadian car and truck owners are spending less on maintenance and repairs than they did in 2008.

The study, released yesterday by consumer survey firm J.D. Power and Associates, found average annual expenditures on vehicle maintenance and repairs shrunk to $856 in 2009 from $920 in 2008 — a decline of seven per cent.

The survey also found the proportion of customers who say they "go to the cheapest place I can find for service" has increased to 23 per cent from 17 per cent in 2008.

"In a difficult economy, vehicle owners seem to be delaying what they perceive to be non-essential maintenance or seeking out the lowest-cost option."
Darren Slind of J.D. Power and Associates

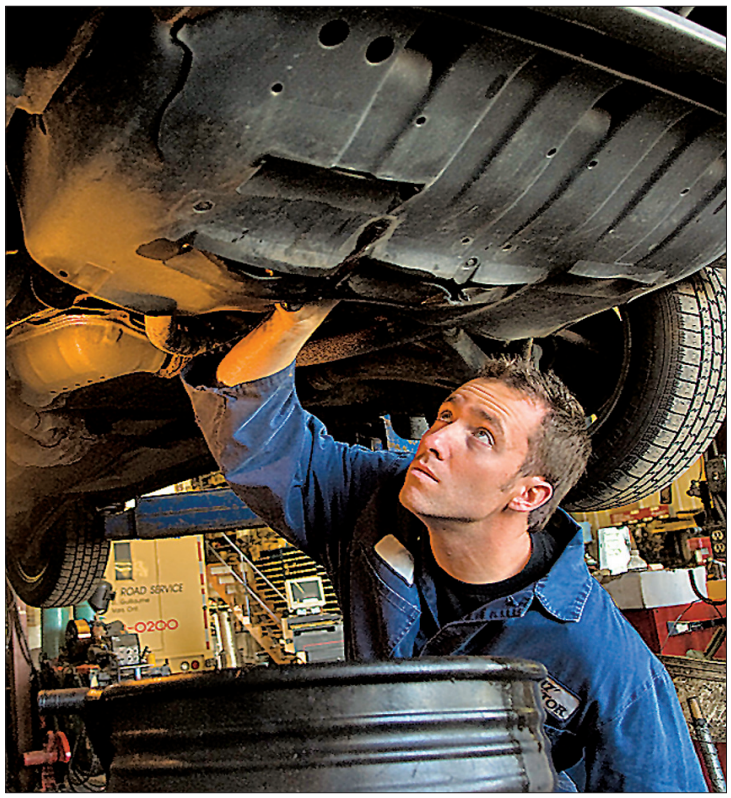
"In a difficult economy, vehicle owners seem to be delaying what they perceive to be non-essential maintenance or seeking out the lowest-cost option," stated Darren Slind, senior director and Canadian automotive practice leader at J.D. Power.

"In the long run, this may prove more costly in terms of vehicle reliability, but in the short term, consumers are dealing with other spending priorities."

The J.D. Power survey also found that price-conscious consumers are increasingly turning to aftermarket service providers — or autobody shops that aren't affiliated with a specific automaker — rather than new-car dealers for their maintenance work.

Aftermarket providers now account for 59 per cent of the $11.2-billion annual service market for vehicles between three and 12 years old, up from 57 per cent in 2008, J.D. Power found.

"While a two-percentage-point shift may not seem substantial, this equates to more than $220 million in lost revenue annually for dealers," Slind said. "Given declining new-vehicle sales — which are down more than 16 per cent in Canada so far this year — dealers must rely more than ever on their service and parts operations. We expect that dealers will fight back aggressively in the coming year to recapture this lost market share."



Canadian car and truck owners are spending less on maintenance and repairs this year than they did in 2008, a J.D. Power and Associates study has found.

J.D. Power's 2009 Canadian Customer Commitment Index Study is based on responses from 14,388 owners across Canada whose vehicles are between three and 12 years old.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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iPhone app for renting Avis cars
Avis Rent A Car has announced a free mobile iPod application that will allow travellers to book car rental reservations throughout Canada and the U.S. via their Apple iPhones. CANADIANDRIVER.COM

Passat CC's got curves

LORNE DRURY
for Metro Canada

When asked to describe a Volkswagen, I think many people would call them solid, reliable, German-engineered automobiles.

If those same people were asked about a Mercedes-Benz, they might use the words luxurious, stylish and upscale.

But, if we asked them what they thought of the new 2009 Volkswagen Passat CC, I would be quite surprised if the words luxurious, stylish and upscale didn't creep into the conversation, just as they would with the Mercedes.

In fact, the Passat CC has more than a passing resemblance to the Mercedes-Benz CLS-Class, a coupe-like sedan starting at $93,500. But the CC (it stands for Comfort Coupe) starts at less than half that and is equally as stunning.

In their advertising literature, Volkswagen calls its new CC "a car with curves that hugs the curves."

It couldn't be said any better.

The CC didn't take long to get the attention of automotive journalists — it was selected Best New Family Car over $30,000 by the Automobile Journalists Association of Canada during voting last fall. It was up against some pretty good competition as well, including the redesigned Nissan Maxima, the Pontiac G8 and the Volvo V70.

2009 VW Passat CC

Type: Four-door mid-size sedan
Price: from $31,975
Engine: 2.0-litre four-cylinder inline turbocharged (200 hp, 207 lb/ft); 3.6-litre DOHC V6 (280 hp, 265 lb/ft)

Highlights

- Family car with luxurious looks
- Smooth ride

I've been a fan of the CC since I first saw it at the North American International Auto Show a year ago January and couldn't wait to get behind the wheel. I thought to myself 'if it drives as well as it looks, it's a winner.'

Well, it is.

When it came time to select a car for our late spring drive down to Vermont for our annual getaway to the Green Mountain Inn in Stowe, the CC was an ideal choice.

The CC is available with two engine choices, a turbocharged 2.0-litre inline four-cylinder, producing 200 hp and 207 lb/ft of torque. It starts at $31,975 with a six-speed manual transmission and $33,375 with a six-speed automatic with Tiptronic.

My tester was an upgraded Highline model (Sportline is the standard fare) with six-speed automatic, pricing out at $39,375. At the top of the line is a Highline V6, featuring a 3.6-litre V6 engine with 280 hp, 265 lb/ft of torque and 4MOTION all-wheel drive. It starts at $44,975.

However, even the base Sportline model is well turned out, offering features such as 17-inch alloy wheels, 12-way power adjustable front driver's seat with lumbar support, auto-dimming mirror, automatic headlights, cruise control, digital compass, six airbags, halogen headlights, eight-speaker premium audio system with in-dash six-disc CD changer, sport suspension, tire pressure monitoring system, and heated front seats and washer nozzles.

The CC Highline adds leather seats, dual zone electronic climate control, Panorama vent sunroof, sport seats, Sirius satellite radio, brushed aluminum interior trim, Bi-Xenon headlights, 18-inch alloy wheels and 12-way driver's seat.

Above, the 2009 Volkswagen Passat CC was the winner in the Automobile Journalists Association of Canada (AJAC) Best New Family Car over $30K; Inside, the Passat CC is very upscale with nice use of wood and brushed aluminum accents in the Highline edition, starting at $37,995.

In my first experience with the Passat CC, I found the heavily bolstered driver's seat to be a touch uncomfortable. However, this time around, I was able to get it adjusted for a perfect fit, and I was never uncomfortable during the 12 or so hours we spent in the car travelling to and from the Green Mountain state.

The CC cruises nicely and the turbo four-cylinder is quiet at speed, but with a bit of a whine on heavy acceleration. During AJAC's Car of the Year testing last fall, the CC posed acceleration numbers of 7.9 seconds (0-100 km/h) and 5.9 seconds (80-120 km/h).

The ride is more sport sedan than luxury sedan, meaning it's on the firmer side. Nevertheless, it handled the winter-scarred roads you find in parts of Vermont without jarring the passengers out of their seats.

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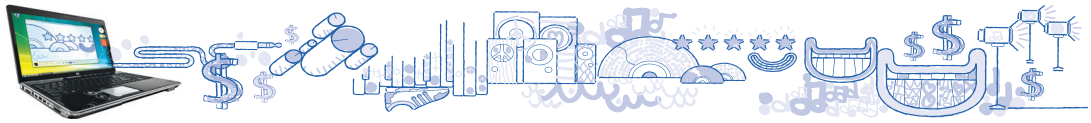
hp

Porsche 911 Turbo coming
Porsche AG will present its new top-of-the-line 911 at the Frankfurt Auto Show in September. The Porsche 911 Turbo goes on sale in Canada in January 2010. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Lincoln's luxury

MKZ cool entry point to classy vehicles

ROB BIENTEMA
for Metro Canada

The evolution of luxury continues with the latest entry-level addition to the Lincoln lineup — the 2010 Lincoln MKZ.

This newest mid-size Lincoln builds on the foundation of a taut CD3 platform shared with the Mazda6 and, although the MKZ stems from Zephyr lineage, it takes its styling and design elements from its earlier-released big brother, the full-size Lincoln MKS.

Both cars share common ancestry, tracing their design inspirations back to a much lauded MKR concept that debuted at the Detroit show in 2007.

With significant changes inside and out over the previous mid-size model, the MKZ bolsters its updated design with both cosmetic and dynamic improvements along with a slew of new available technologies.

The 2010 Lincoln MKZ starts with a brand new face. Lincoln's classic waterfall grille has been replaced with a split-wing grille. A new, more aggressively open front fascia and thinner wraparound headlamps emphasize a wider, sportier look.

Character lines edge to the rear where a new decklid and wider LED tail lamps also accentuate the width of the car.

Dipped in white, as tested (a simple and elegant colour choice that's starting to grow on me), highlighted with chrome and handsome from any angle, this is definitely a break away from the old float boats of bygone years, part of the new Lincoln philosophy that blends edgier sport performance with the expected posh lux appointments.

And the best way to accent sportiness is with an aggressive stance on big wheels — 17-inch aluminum or chrome rims or an upgrade to available 18-inch polished aluminum wheels, part of a Sport Appearance Package with sport-tuned suspension on my tester.

The seats in the 2010 Lincoln MKZ charcoal black Bridge of Weir leather interior with cashmere tuxedo seams.

The 2010 Lincoln MKZ, a five-passenger mid-size sedan, all-new inside and out, with a long list of new technologies and features for entry-level luxury buyers.

Inside, the MKZ cabin has been refined. Genuine wood accents are available but I thought the aluminum of the Sport Appearance package blended particularly well with the dark textures and chrome highlights on dash and doors.

The seats in my tester added a sporty élan, charcoal black buckets with cashmere tuxedo seams and contrasting piping along the edges for an almost nautical look and feel.

If I was shopping for a mid-size, I confess I'd check out the new Ford Fusion first, the sibling to the MKZ that has become pretty refined in its own right, while keeping to a lower starting price.

But for those customers looking to broach the Lincoln marque and the elegance and quality that the brand represents, the 2010 Lincoln MKZ is a good place to start, combining entry-level luxury with new levels of technology and amenities.

2010 Lincoln MKZ

Type: Five-passenger, mid-size, entry-level luxury sedan
Price: from $37,899
Engine: 3.5-litre V6 Duratec (263 hp, 249 lb/ft)

Highlights

- Sporty
- Plenty of technology and amenities

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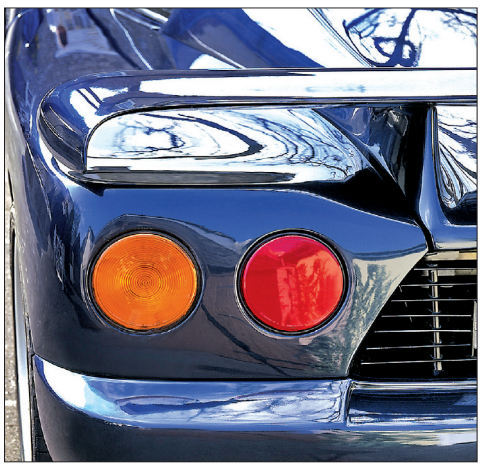

Aftermarket modifications to cars, such as adding a spoiler, may lead to a hike in your insurance rate.

Customizing car may affect insurance

Everyday we see them on our streets, customized vehicles with non-stock spoilers, enhanced engines, raised suspensions and the like. Needless to say that the post-manufacturer auto modification business is a booming one.

But while adding performance parts and "styling" features to your vehicle can give it a distinct appearance and improve performance, they may also impact your auto insurance.

So before you add a turbo-charged engine, stylish rims or even tint your windows, it is a good idea to contact your insurance broker or insurer to make certain you have the right coverage.

Insurance expert Mauro Convertini from Aviva Canada, points out how vehicle modifications can increase risk and premiums as a result.

He explains, "certain modifications can put motorists at a greater risk of having a collision, such as a lowered or raised suspension, or increasing the size of your engine. Your vehicle could become untrustworthy on the road and impact your safety as well as your access to coverage."

Even modifications you would expect to better the insurance risk of your vehicle, like an improved brake system, may still increase the cost of insurance for the following reasons:

"Certain modifications can put motorists at a greater risk of having a collision."
Aviva Canada's Mauro Convertini

- The modifications might increase the value of the vehicle and then the insurer has to pay out more in the event of a claim.
- Modified vehicles often are more attractive to thieves increasing the risk of theft.
- Vehicles with performance modifications generally mean that the performance of the vehicle is improved which can lead to more severe accidents.

Remember an insurer could refuse to pay a claim and even leave you uninsured if you have not disclosed modifications to your vehicle. So before you invest time and money on a project that could raise your premium, call your broker or insurance company and verify that your insurance will remain valid. NEWS CANADA

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#Limited time lease offers based on new 2009 Honda models. Lease examples based on new 2009 Accord LX Sedan, model CP2539E / 2009 Civic DX Sedan, model FA1529EX / 2009 CR-V LX 2WD, model RE3839E available through Honda Financial Services on approved credit. £2.9% / 1.9% / 2.9% lease APR for 48 / 48 / 48 months. Monthly payment is $298 / $178 / $298 with $3,437.75 / $2,787.12 / $4,344.64 down payment which includes $1,000 / $500 / $1,000 Lease Cash Allowance or equivalent trade, $1,550 / $1,395 / $1,590 freight and PDI, first monthly payment and $0 / $0 / $0 security deposit due at lease inception. Lease Cash Allowance includes taxes. Total lease obligation is $20,048.18 / $12,804.17 / $21,072.96. Taxes, license, insurance and registration are extra. 96,000 / 96,000 / 96,000 kilometre allowance; charge of $0.12/km for excess kilometres. Retailer may lease for less. Retailer order / trade may be necessary. †Limited time financing offer based on new 2009 Honda models. Finance example based on new 2009 Civic DX Sedan, model FA1529EX, available through Honda Financial Services on approved credit. ‡MSRP is $16,990 (plus $1,395 freight and PDI), financed at 0.9% APR equals $313.48 per month for 60 months. Cost of borrowing is $423.65 for a total obligation of $18,808.65. Taxes, license, insurance and registration are extra. Retailer may sell for less. Retailer order / trade may be necessary, MSRP of Accord EX-L Sedan, model CP2589JN / Civic EX-L Sedan, model FA1509JNX / CR-V EX-L, model RE4879JN shown is $30,090 / $23,680 / $35,190 plus $1,550 / $1,395 / $1,590 freight and PDI. ¥August Bonus Dollars offers will vary from model to model: $500 August Bonus Dollars available on new V6 Accord models; $1,000 August Bonus Dollars available on new 4-cylinder Accord models; $1,500 August Bonus Dollars available on all new CR-V models. $500 / $1,000 / $1,500 August Bonus Dollars offers applies only to retail customer purchase, lease or finance agreements for select new 2009 Accord and CR-V models concluded, respectively, between August 1st, 2009 and August 31st, 2009. August Bonus Dollars offer includes GST, PST, HST, QST where applicable. Valid only on purchase, lease or finance agreements concluded at participating Honda retailers. #/£/†/¥Offers valid from August 1st, 2009 through August 31st, 2009 at participating Honda retailers. Offers only valid for Ontario residents at Ontario Honda Dealers. Offers subject to change or cancellation without notice. See your Honda retailer for full details. *As reported by Canadian manufacturers for calendar year 2008. ◊As reported by the Automotive Lease Guide. Visit www.alg.com for more information.

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*MSRP for 2010 Forte 2.0L MT (F0540A) is $15,695. License, registration, insurance, dealer administration fees, taxes and delivery and destination fees of $1,455 excluded. Monthly lease payment for 2010 Forte 2.0L MT (F0540A) is $229 for 36 months at 1.9% APR with $1,865 down payment. Total lease obligation is $10,125 with the option to purchase at end of term for $7,675. Lease has 20,000 km/year allowance (other packages available) and $0.10/km for excess. Finance APR for 2010 Forte is 2.9% for 60 months OAC. License, registration, insurance, dealer administration fees, lease acquisition fees, and taxes are excluded for finance/lease/cash purchases, where applicable. Delivery & Destination fees of $1,455 included in monthly payment. Other lease and finance options available. ◆Purchase price for 2009 Rondo LX AT (RN7519) is $17,495 and includes a cash rebate of $2,500 based on an MSRP of $19,995. Delivery and destination fees of $1,650 excluded. License, registration, insurance, administration fees and taxes are excluded. Other lease and finance options also available. Prices subject to change without notice. Certain restrictions may apply. ❖Cash back and 0% purchase financing available on all 2009 models for 48 months OAC. Cash back amount varies by model. Not applicable on future value financing. Prices subject to change without notice. Certain restrictions may apply. >Highway/city fuel consumption for 2009 Rondo LX is 7.5 L (38 MPG)/10.6 L (27 MPG) per 100km. The actual fuel consumption of these vehicles may vary. These estimates are based on the Government of Canada's approved criteria and testing methods. Refer to the Government of Canada publication EnerGuide Fuel Consumption Guide. Offer ends August 31 2009. Vehicles may not be exactly as shown. See West Toronto Kia for full details.

Parents' worries begin once they hand over the car keys to a newly licensed teen driver.

What are your teens doing behind wheel?

Survey finds out if moms are snooping on kids

For teenagers, getting their driver's license is one of life's most exciting moments.

For a parent, it's one of the most distressing.

New technologies promise to alleviate parents' worries by keeping tabs on their teen drivers, but the use of these tools raises an ethical question: Do they cross the line between good parenting and invasion of privacy? MotherProof.com surveyed moms of U.S. teens to gauge how much snooping they're willing to do.

MotherProof.com's survey found that two-thirds of moms don't use technology to snoop on their teen drivers: 64 per cent of moms said they would not put a camera or GPS tracking device in their child's vehicle.

However, 53 per cent of moms admitted to investigating the contents of their teen's car, and 36 per cent said they regularly check the miles on their teen's car to see how much they're driving.

While most moms are very trusting, the survey indicates that younger moms are more likely to second-guess their teen's driving habits. Some interesting results among this group include:

- 59 per cent of moms ages 25-34 either would consider putting a camera or GPS system in their teen's car or have already done so, versus 43 per cent of moms ages 35-44 and 27 per cent of moms ages 45-54.
- 57 per cent of moms 25-34 have followed their child in traffic to see where they're going and investigate their driving habits, versus 29 per cent of moms 35-44 and 18 per cent of moms 45-54.
- 70 per cent of moms 25-34 have investigated the contents of their teen's car, versus 52 per cent of moms 35-44 and 50 per cent of moms 45-54.
- 65 per cent of moms 25-34 regularly check the miles on their teen's car to see how much they're driving, versus 39 per cent of moms 35-44 and 27 per cent of moms 45-54.

FROM CARGUIDE

Monitoring devices

- Research suggests that monitoring devices reduce risky teen driving.

A 2009 study by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, In-Vehicle Monitoring and the Driving Behavior of Teenagers, followed 85 recently licensed teenagers with monitoring devices in their vehicles.

IIHS found that monitoring devices reduced risky driving among teens, especially when it came to seat belt use.

With the rate of fatal crashes four times as high for drivers ages 16-19 as it is for older drivers, any reduced risk these monitoring devices bring could make them very appealing to parents.

Tire good for moon, and earth

TECHNOLOGY NASA and Goodyear have developed an airless tire to transport large, long-range vehicles across the surface of the moon.

The new "Spring Tire" with 800 load bearing springs is designed to carry much heavier vehicles over much greater distances than the wire mesh tire previously used on the Apollo Lunar Roving Vehicle (LRV). The new tire will allow for broader exploration and the eventual development and maintenance of a lunar outpost.

According to Vivake Asnani, NASA's principal investigator at the Glenn Research Center in Cleveland, this was a significant change in requirements that required innovation.

According to Goodyear engineers, development of the original Apollo lunar mission tires, and the new Spring Tire were driven by the fact that traditional rubber, pneumatic (air-filled) tires used on Earth have little utility on the moon. This is because rubber properties vary significantly between the extreme cold and hot temperatures experienced in the shaded and directly sunlit areas of the moon.

"Virtually everyone I spoke with was blown away by the idea that this technology may one day be used, not only for extraterrestrial vehicles, but also, perhaps, for vehicles here on Earth," noted Asnani.

FROM CARGUIDE

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Total Price Adjustment	**$3,323**

Your Employee Price
$19,476*
Offer excludes freight

2010 Ford Focus S

MSRP (Dealer may sell for less)	$14,999
Employee Price Adjustment	$735
Total Price Adjustment	**$735**

Your Employee Price
$14,264*
Offer excludes freight

2010 Ford Mustang Coupe V6

MSRP (Dealer may sell for less)	$25,999
Employee Price Adjustment	$2,065
Delivery Allowance	$1,000
Total Price Adjustment	**$3,065**

Your Employee Price
$22,934*
Offer excludes freight

2009 Ford Ranger SuperCab Sport 4x2

MSRP (Dealer may sell for less)	$19,299
Employee Price Adjustment	$1,680
Delivery Allowance	$4,500
Total Price Adjustment	**$6,180**

Your Employee Price
$13,119*
Offer excludes freight

2009 Ford F150 SuperCab XLT 4x2

MSRP (Dealer may sell for less)	$32,799
Employee Price Adjustment	$3,732
Delivery Allowance	$6,500
Total Price Adjustment	**$10,232**

Your Employee Price **$22,567***

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Ontario FDAA, P.O. Box 2000, Oakville, Ontario L6J 5E4

Cruising for heroes

A Toronto-area classic car cruise on Saturday will promote and fund a Royal Canadian Legion initiative to erect a Battle Cross Memorial and flag on the Highway of Heroes. For more information, contact Doug Brigham at 905-278-1705. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Canada's design diva Debbie Travis.

Tanning with Porsche

MyDrive

Heather Buchan

metronews.ca/mydrive

Debbie Travis recalls the night last year when she slept in her car while in New York City, rather than leave it parked all night alone on the street. "I became so paranoid, I didn't want to leave it," recounts the beloved TV personality and decorating doyenne of her 2007 Porsche 911 Carrera 4S Cabrio Convertible.

"I thought (my husband) would kill me if I came back and the wheels were missing. It was probably more dangerous sleeping in the car," she concedes. But it's this profound dedication that has propelled her to prolific status as a painting, decorating, renovating and design expert.

COURTESY PORSCHE CANADA

Debbie Travis owns a 2007 Porsche 911 Carrera Convertible.

Despite owning the Porsche as well as a 2008 BMW X5 and two other cars — a 1999 Mercedes 320 Camio and a 1963 Mercedes 220 SC — the former host of Debbie Travis' Painted House and Debbie Travis' Facelift, has had her share of old clunkers, which she looks back on with genuine fondness.

Recalling the first car she bought at 17, the mother of two says, "It was a Morris Minor. It was so old that the front doors were sealed up so I had to get in through the back." But today Travis can enjoy the fruits of her labour. "It's a bit opulent. I felt a big guilty at first," she says of her Porsche, which boasts a rare white exterior, brown roof and a champagne interior.

"But I really like the feel of it. And I use it as a sun-tanning tool. I like having the roof down and getting a tan because I'm a multi-tasker," jokes the author of eight books. "So I can get my tan and get from A to B."

Although you can catch her buzzing about Montreal, where she and her husband of nearly 25 years live, with her Porsche's sunroof down on a nice day, Travis' dream vehicle actually goes back to basics.

"I use it as a sun-tanning tool. I like having the roof down and getting a tan because I am a multitasker."
Debbie Travis about her Porsche 911 Carrera

"I want to have a little (Piaggio) Ape one day," she says of the three-wheeled carts that are a familiar mode of transport in Italian villages. "They have an engine smaller than a sewing machine and I think they're one of the cutest things."

Next month, Travis heads to Tuscany to host a week-long trip for 12 women. For information on this trip, visit debbietravis.com.

Heather Buchan is a Toronto-based journalist who has at several magazines, including Hello! Canada, where she cut her teeth in the world of celebrities.

Film promos drive Camaro buzz: Study

RESEARCH Kelley Blue Book, kbb.com, a U.S. provider of new car and used car information, recently announced the results of the latest analysis by Kelley Blue Book Market Intelligence of the top 20 most-researched new-vehicles for the first half of 2009. Here are the results:

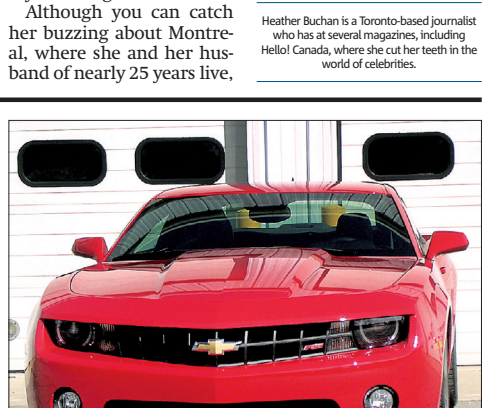
1. Honda Accord
2. Honda Civic
3. Toyota Camry
4. Honda CR-V
5. Toyota Corolla
6. Toyota Highlander
7. Nissan Altima
8. Toyota RAV4
9. Toyota Prius
10. Ford Mustang
11. Honda Pilot
12. Mazda3
13. Honda Odyssey
14. Ford Fusion
15. Ford Escape
16. Chevrolet Camaro
17. Volkswagen Jetta
18. Toyota Sienna
19. Chevrolet Malibu
20. Lexus RX350

Honda and Toyota frequently dominate the kbb.com most-researched lists, and while they still have a major turnout for the first-half of 2009 (securing 11 of the top 20 spots), this list demonstrates that a few newly redesigned models have captured the attention of consumers.

When compared year-over-year to the most-researched new-vehicles for the first half of 2008, four models are all-new to this year's top 20 list: Chevrolet Camaro, Ford Fusion, Volkswagen Jetta and Lexus RX350.

Chevrolet's buzzworthy Camaro made the most impressive jump onto this year's list, from number 427 in June 2008 to number 16 in June 2009. Primary drivers of increased Camaro research include hefty movie promotions with the Transformers films and significant advertising executed in the past year.

The Ford Fusion jumped 43 positions from number 57 in June 2008 to number 14 in June 2009 due to the introduction and heavy promotion of Ford's 2010 Fusion and Fusion Hybrid models. **FROM CARGUIDE**



The Chevrolet Camaro made the greatest jump up in a list of most researched vehicles by U.S.-based Kelley Blue Book.

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Motorcycle ride for cellphone ban
A U.S. man kicked off a 25,750 km motorcycle ride Monday to raise awareness of the dangers of using a cellphone while driving, canadiandriver.com reports. Tony Anschutz will ride a solo, two-month marathon with stops to meet people and raise awareness. METRO NEWS

SERVICES

Big Three customers more satisfied: Survey

All three U.S.-based automakers are doing a better job of satisfying their customers than they were a year ago, according to a recent survey.

General Motors Co., Ford Motor Co. and Chrysler Group LLC all posted significant gains in this year's American Customer Satisfaction Index released yesterday by the University of Michigan.

"Although the future will obviously be challenging for Detroit, the rise in customer satisfaction provides a much needed improvement in competitive standing," Claes Fornell, the University of Michigan business professor who heads the annual survey, said in a statement.

Fornell said keeping customers happy is key for the automakers, especially at a time when less people are buying cars, because they will be more likely to come back the next time they need a new vehicle.

GM's Cadillac and Toyota's Lexus brands tied for first place in the survey with scores of 89 out of 100. That marked a four point increase for Cadillac from its 2008 results and a two point improvement for Lexus, which also ranked first in last year's survey.

GM's Buick brand, Honda and Ford's Lincoln Mercury vehicles all received an 88. The Lincoln Mercury score marked a 5 point increase over its results for the previous year, while Buick's score rose by three points.

BMW received an 87, while Mercedes, Toyota and Volkswagen each got an 86. Volkswagen's increase of five points, or 6.2 per cent, marked the biggest jump from the year before. Hyundai received an 85, while the Chrysler's namesake brand rose four-points to 84. GM's Saturn brand also got an 84.

"Although the future will obviously be challenging for Detroit, the rise in customer satisfaction provides a much needed improvement in competitive standing."
University of Michigan Professor Claes Fornell

The Chevrolet and Ford brands rose by four points and three points respectively to 83, while GMC fell by one point to 82.

Dodge, Kia, Mazda and Pontiac all received an 81. Jeep and Nissan, fell to the bottom of the pack with a 79 and 78, respectively. Nissan was one of the few brands to post a decrease from the year before, falling four points, or 4.9 per cent.

The overall automotive industry's score was 84, up from 82 the year before.

There were over 11,000 telephone surveys conducted and about 5,500 for the auto industry in the second quarter of this year, asking respondents to rate their satisfaction of the vehicles on a scale of zero to 100. At the industry level, the margin of error is plus or minus one point. At the company level it is plus or minus three points.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dream car

The Ferrari California features the automaker's first front-mounted V8 and first twin-clutch transmission.

California screaming

Ferrari model's sweet wail could wake the dead

PETER BLEAKNEY
for Metro Canada

Ferrari aficionados were a trifle worried about the 2009 California. Developed with the intent of expanding Ferrari's market beyond the highly-focused V8 mid-engined F430 and the classic V12 front-engined 612 Scaglietti and 599 GTB, would this "user-friendly" 2+2 featuring the marque's first front-mounted V8, first twin-clutch transmission and first folding hard-top be less of a Prancing Horse and more of Mincing Pony? A trophy car for trophy wives? Would it be a real Ferrari?

Allow me to answer those questions. No. Most likely. Hell, yeah.

Prodding the California's throttle delivers eye-widening forward thrust accompanied by a wail from the flat-plane-crank 4.3L V8 that could wake the dead — and have them cheering. Added to this is a symphony of snaps, crackles and pops while flicking through the gears of the fast-shifting seven-speed box.

Nothing sounds like a Ferrari, and with the hard-top accordioned after its 14-second ballet, you'll feel you're getting every penny's worth of that $262,000 investment.

The all-aluminum California is a striking car, and here in been-there-done-that So-Cal, the red specimen I drove with optional 20-inch wheels was mobbed at every stop.

The side vents and functional hood scoop recall the 1954-1964 California 250 GTs from which this car gets its name.

The back end is a tad, er... voluptuous, but its girth is pretty well disguised by the sweeping fenders carved into the rear flanks.

Swathed in finely stitched leather, the interior is unmistakably Ferrari, especially if you go for the classic tan hide.

Swathed in finely stitched leather, the interior is unmistakably Ferrari.

The back seats are pretty much unusable, so if you don't need to carry small children the no-cost parcel shelf option seems a good idea.

The jewel of the California lies under the hood — a revised version of the F430's 4.3L DOHC 90-degree V8 featuring Ferrari's first application of direct injection. It delivers 453 hp and 358 lb.-ft. of torque, with 75 per cent of that twist available from 2,250 r.p.m.

It's not all sunshine in the California, however. The standard carbon-ceramic Brembo brakes squeal, the transmission gets jerky in stop-and-go traffic, and the seats don't offer a lot of lateral support.

The steering could be better too. It's overly assisted and doesn't deliver the expected feedback.

But those gripes seem to fade away when the California is in its natural environment — blasting top down along a winding inland road in (where else?) sunny California.

2009 Ferrari California

Type: Sports convertible
Price: from $262,000
Engine: 4.3L DOHC V8
Power/Torque: 453 hp; 358 lb.-ft.

Highlights

- Voluptuous looks
- Ferrari-style interior

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High Street Fashion Week

From Sept. 7-11 London's Oxford Street will host the U.K.'s first High Street Fashion Week, which will include promotional shopping days; fashion and beauty workshops; and late night shopping-and-champagne receptions. See oxfordstreet.co.uk for more details. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Travel

Waterford Crystal Visitor Centre

When Waterford Wedgwood PLC filed for bankruptcy protection at the start of this year, among the casualties was one of Ireland's top tourist attractions, namely watching the glassblowers at the Waterford factory. But while there are no factory tours this season, visitors can find a revamped experience at the Waterford Crystal Visitor Centre — including a demonstration of cutting and engraving. For full details visit waterfordvisitorcentre.com. METRO NEWS SERVICES

TRAVELDESK@METRONEWS.CA

Ten out of 10

At Winnipeg's iconic Fort Garry Hotel, Ten Spa offers up a luxurious experience

BY ANNE DIMON
for Metro Canada

TYRONE MCFADDON

Left, the lounge at Ten Spa features white leather settees with gauzy white privacy sheers. Right, the spa's large, mosaic-tiled co-ed hammam.

As I walk into Ten Spa, on the tenth floor of Winnipeg's landmark Fort Garry Hotel, what pops into my mind is that it's surprisingly elegant.

I'd heard only good things, but hadn't expected it to be so upscale. As far as spas go, it's less what one might expect in Winnipeg and more like New York meets Vegas.

In the lounge, white leather settees (some grouped together and surrounded by gauzy white sheers for semi privacy), rich dark woods and a wall of multi-toned brown and beige mosaic tiles set a sophisticated environment.

While awaiting services — the full gamut of massages, bodywork and esthetics offered in 11 treatments rooms plus a mani/pedi area overlooking the cityscape and the historic Forks Market — guests snack on dried fruit, cookies, muffins and dates.

A spa menu of more substantial offerings is available, and champagne and dessert can be pre-ordered.

Modern and stylish, the spa is indeed a beautiful space, but it's the large and lovely mosaic-tiled co-ed hammam and the hot-air bathing ritual that really gives Ten its point of distinction.

More details

- tenspa.com
- destinationwinnipeg.ca

Massage therapist, Mario Digirolamo, escorts me to the heated hammam tea room to acclimatize. Here, in this tiny, comfy space, guests warm themselves while nibbling on Turkish sweets and sipping traditional mint-flavoured Moroccan tea. This is also where the spa robe is exchanged for a traditional pestemal — think checkered table cloth that you wrap around your torso — before entering the hammam.

Wearing the pestemal, you shower and give yourself a sea salt scrub before lying down on a raised and heated marble platform for the wash with a traditional handmade olive oil-based soap.

That's followed by a brisk brushing with a gommage, which is a rough glove, then another scrub with soap. Overhead, tiny (read tasteful) twinkling lights give the feeling that you're staring up at the night sky from someplace that has one very humid climate. Soft strains of Middle Eastern music add to the experience.

Every few minutes a spew of steam keeps the hammam at a sweltering 45 C. If you can't stand the heat, stay out of the hammam. Seriously.

Suddenly, a cool wave washes over me — literally — as Maria gently dumps a tas (traditional Turkish container) full of water over my soaped-up skin. Even if you don't like to be doused gently with cool water, it's so hot in here you'll welcome it.

Then, there's a scheduled "time out" to rehydrate and you can take the break back in the tea room or in the hammam itself with a bottle of iced water or a cool shower.

Next, in one of the hammam's private rooms, there's another scrub down with olive oil soap followed by a massage. One of the massage "tools" is a fine cotton pillow filled with air and olive oil suds. Image how it might feel to be massaged with a cloud — very unusual. A few therapist-guided stretches completes the hammam part of the treatment.

Then there's a 20-minute "relax" in the Quiet Room, which is elegantly cozy with pearl grey walls, candlelight and more white leather furnishings which are roomy enough to allow guests to stretch out and nap. Those who have just emerged from the hammam are served an ayran (a mix of yogurt, sea salt and spring water) to help replenish the electrolytes lost along with toxins in the heat of the hammam.

Feeling good — and squeaky clean — I leave Ten Spa to explore the rest of this pleasantly surprising city.

Anne Dimon is a spa and wellness travel writer and editor of traveltowellness.com

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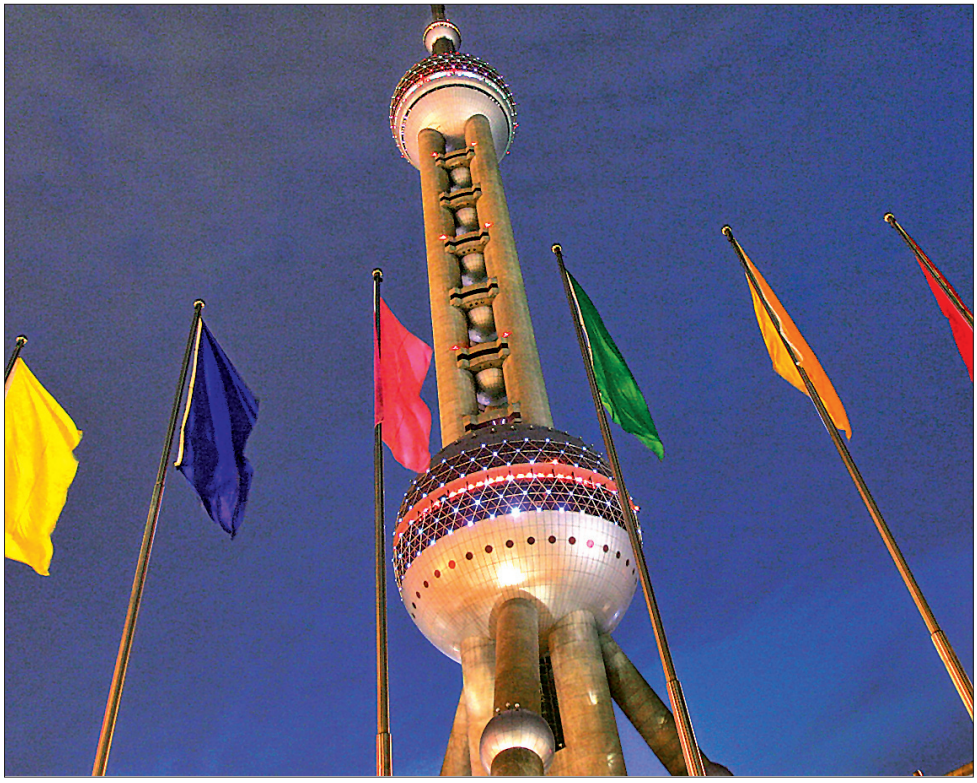
Charleston insider
Bestselling author Pat Conroy has a new book out set in Charleston, S.C., and Southern Living magazine's August issue highlights some of the places featured in the novel, called South of Broad. The magazine also interviewed Conroy about spots he likes best around Charleston. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



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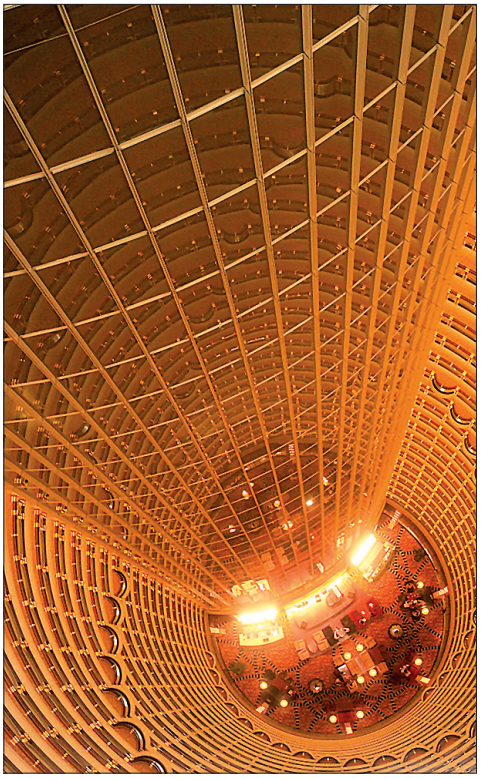

EUGENE HOSHIKO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Left, the Shanghai Oriental Pearl Tower, one of the landmarks of the financial hub Shanghai. Right, a top view of the 53rd to 87th floors of the Jin Mao Tower's the Grand Hyatt Shanghai.

Shanghai gets ready to show off

Fashion-forward city prepares to host next year's World Expo

WILKE MARTENS
Metro World News

Shanghai boasts the largest port in the world, one of the largest skyscrapers in the world, and the highest hotel in the world.

All of that makes the city dazzling enough to begin with, but in addition, Shanghai is currently a massive construction site as it prepares to host next year's World Expo.

The taxi ride from Shanghai Pudong International Airport to your hotel offers an introduction to the city's majestic scale. Driving over elevated roads, your view comprises towers and apartment buildings. It comes as no surprise that the traffic in a city with 20 million inhabitants is pretty chaotic. Nevertheless, Shanghai offers both bustle and peacefulness.

Get a feel for the city with a stroll along the Bund — the boulevard alongside the shimmering Huangpu River — which is home to exquisite shops and fancy bars. From here you can also see the famous towers with their twinkling lights.

After snacking on a candied apple, it's time for the heavier stuff. Be sure to pay a visit to Bar Rouge on the top floor of the Bund 18 building.

With great DJs and bottles of champagne being ordered abundantly, it's a true party atmosphere. On the terrace of the bar you'll have a great view of Shanghai's skyline as you dance the night away; bar-rouge-shanghai.com.

Looking for a day of rest in this booming city? People's Square offers a bit of quietness in a green environment.

Sit down and enjoy the sight of children fishing for goldfish, elderly people playing checkers or cards and amorous teenagers strolling along the paths. If you're in an arty mood during your walk through the park, you can pop in to the Museum of Contemporary Art, where you can see the country's latest visual artworks.

World Financial Centre

The World Financial Centre is best visited in the evening. This enormous illuminated tower is even more fascinating when it is dark. At 492 metres up in the air, it's the world's third largest skyscraper. You can enter the building for free and go up to the 93th floor, where you can have a drink at the bar or have dinner in the fancy restaurant. Drinks are pricy, but with a view over the whole city it's definitely worth at least one.

Shanghai Museum

The Shanghai Museum is primarily a beautiful building to look at. The museum is shaped like a "ding," an ancient cooking vessel, of which you can see bronze versions inside. Don't hesitate to go and take a look inside, since admission is free.

You'll find ancient wine vessels, decorated ceramic, Chinese paintings, classical furniture and ancient money.

Yu Garden and the City Temple of Shanghai

In the middle of Shanghai is Yu Garden, a beautiful 16th-century garden with classical Chinese teahouses and temples. Over the rooftops you can see the high-rise buildings of the city. Although the garden is very touristy, you can still find peace and quiet here, walking over precious little bridges and enjoying the scenery. The City Temple of Shanghai is also definitely worth a visit. Here, people pray to large statues of Buddha and burn incense.

Read more on page 43 ››

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Steamwhistle takes off

If in-flight drinks are of importance to you, then you may be interested to know that Steam Whistle Brewing's Premium Pilsner is now part of Porter Airlines' complimentary onboard menu. Beer is being served from 500 ml cans as an introductory promotion. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Treasures at the bottom of the sea

Remote-camera tour will reveal the Baltic's myriad shipwrecks

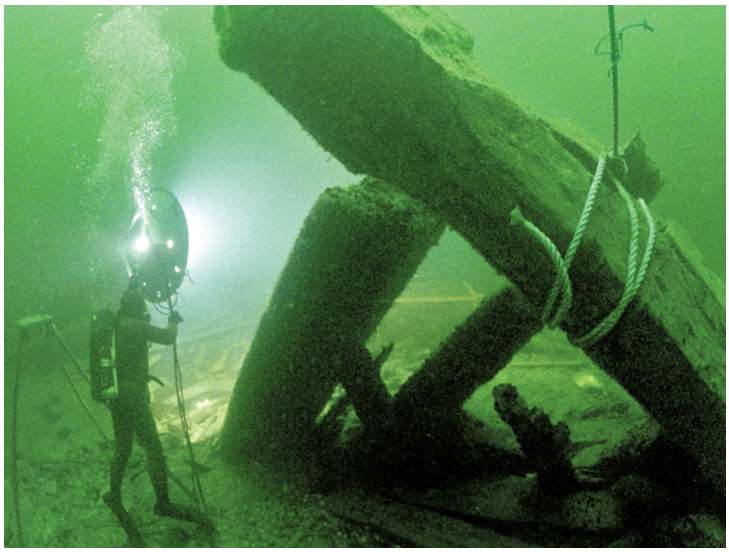
The fire began in the galley, where the crew had kept a stove burning while they visited a tavern ashore. As the flames devoured her stern, the Anna Maria sank through the ice in the Stockholm archipelago.

Three hundred years later, the Dutch merchant ship rests amid seaweed and algae about 18 metres below the surface. Marine archeologist Niklas Eriksson relives the blaze.

"Now I'm swimming towards the stern where the galley was located and it was here that they had dinner, it was here that the fire started," Eriksson says, his voice transmitted through a cable to a research boat on the surface.

"I think it's quite fascinating to be aboard the same ship as those fellows."

The Anna Maria is part of a vast graveyard of ill-fated ships hidden in the murky waters of the Baltic Sea, protected from the shipworm that destroys wooden wrecks in saltier oceans.



BILL CURTSINGER/NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC/GETTY IMAGES

In this file photo, a massive timber from the sternpost of the ship Kronan is flooded with light. Some 20,000 shipwrecks have been already found in the Baltic Sea, and researchers believe as many as 80,000 more could be still waiting to be discovered.

Some 20,000 shipwrecks have been found — half of them in Swedish waters — dating back to as far as the Viking age. Researchers believe as many as 80,000 more could still be waiting to be discovered.

Eriksson and his colleagues plan to offer boat tours where visitors can see some of the most spectacular wrecks through a camera attached to a remotely operated vehicle.

The idea is modelled on a shipwreck tour in Lake Champlain, in Vermont, that uses the same technology. The boats would have flat-screen TVs installed, and the story of each shipwreck site would be told through 3-D animations and old sea charts.

They hope to start the tours next year off the small town of Dalaro, about 40 kilometres from Stockholm. That area is especially rich in wrecks because it used to be the customs zone for ships travelling back and forth to the Swedish capital.

The underground cemetery in the Baltic Sea includes everything from medieval wooden ships to ironclad warships sunk during two world wars.

"They are like the pyramids of northern Europe, these wrecks, if we can only find a way to make them accessible," says Andreas Olsson, head of archeology at the Swedish National Maritime Museums.

> **"They are like the pyramids of northern Europe, these wrecks, if we can only find a way to make them accessible."**
> Andreas Olson

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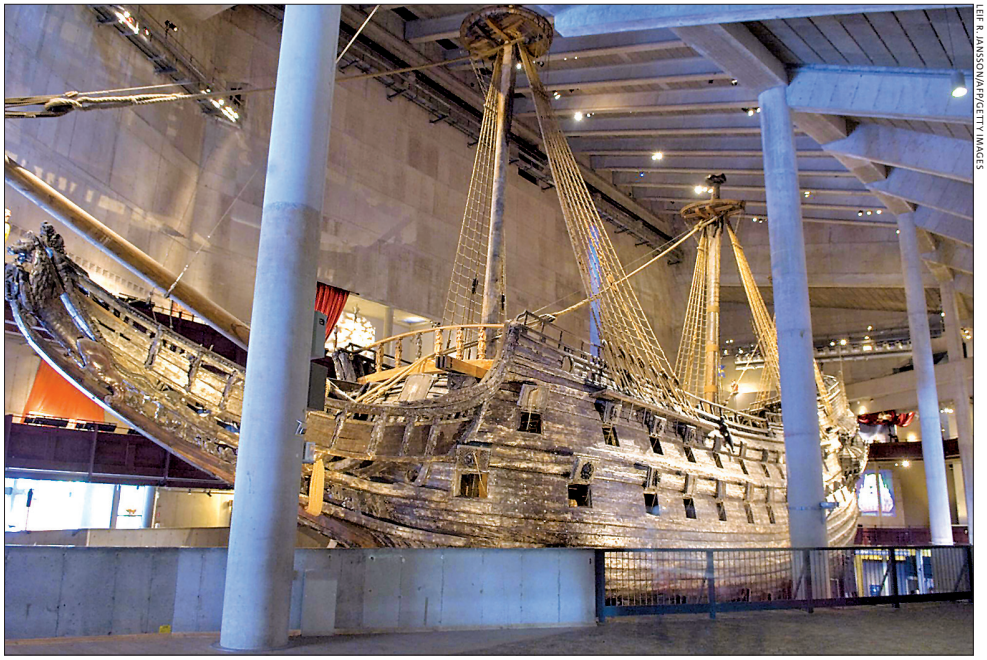

LEIF R. JANSSON/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

In this file photo, the Swedish 17th century royal warship Vasa — the most famous of Sweden's seabed discoveries — lies on drydock in Stockholm. The Vasa was rediscovered nearly intact where she had capsized minutes into its maiden voyage in 1628 in Stockholm harbour. It lay on the seabed until it was located by a shipwreck hunter in 1956, then resurfaced after a five-year salvage effort.

>> Continued from page 38

Not everyone in Dalaro is excited about the plans, and some worry that valuable historical items will be looted from the wrecks. Elise Claeson, a Dalaro resident and columnist at Swedish daily Svenska Dagbladet, said it would be better to salvage the wrecks and keep them in a museum.

"A commercial diving stunt is about to start in the midst of the most sensitive culture-historical parts of Dalaro," she wrote.

Sweden's most famous discovery, the royal warship Vasa, is housed in a popular museum, where visitors can admire the ship's details, down to the flashing teeth of the carved lions that adorn its elaborate exterior.

The Vasa was raised from the Stockholm harbour in 1961, 333 years after it sank on its maiden voyage. "It is fantastic, it really is. It is just how old it is and how well preserved it is," says Anne Hopkins, a 71-year-old visitor from Scotland. "I can only say one thing - wow!"

Another famous ship was discovered in 2003, dubbed the Dalaro wreck.

At a depth of 30 metres, between the islets and rocks of the Dalaro archipelago, two masts from the 17th-century ship of unknown origin are still rising toward the surface.

On the deck, a cannon stands ready to fire. A handgun lies hidden in the rubble. Jars and bottles — one marked with an English coat of arms — are scattered around the ship.

A carved figurehead lion has made researchers uncertain about the ship's origin because it wasn't usual for a cargo vessel at the time.

The plans for Dalaro include a limited number of dive tours each year on the Dalaro Wreck and Anna Maria. Headed by a licensed guide, the tours will be granted exemption by the Stockholm County Administrative Board from a diving ban to avoid damage caused by large numbers of divers.

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For the birds

Columbus, Ohio is getting a new facility to highlight local birdwatching opportunities along the Scioto River, described as an important birding area for thousands of migrating birds from Central and South America who use the spot as a stopover point. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Old-fashioned Waterloo panorama keeps its appeal

It's hard to believe anyone would choose the crackle of distant cannon fire and a very dated 360-degree wall painting over in-your-face kinetic effects of movies and theme parks.

But annually more than 200,000 people visit the Waterloo Panorama in Waterloo, Belgium, for the thrill of seeing a vast, dilapidated, century-old painting showing Napoleon's last stand.

Carole Fonteneau of St. Malo, France, emerged from the place recently fairly excited. "It's quite real with sounds," she said. "My little boy is impressed, too. But it's still hard to feel how it was to be in such a battle."

A visit to Waterloo, where Napoleon was decisively defeated by the Duke of Wellington in 1815, is a march back in time in more than one way.

JIM BUEL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Carole Fonteneau and her son Efflam, 7, of Saint-Malo, France, at the Waterloo Panorama in Waterloo, Belgium. In the age of the Internet, IMAX moves, and Wii, panoramas are an endearing icon of 19th century art and entertainment.

Its panorama shows not only Napoleon's final adieu but, in the era of the Internet, IMAX movies and Wii, is an enduring and endearing icon of old-fashioned art and entertainment.

Panorama insiders and painters — yes, they still paint those things! — say the vast circular canvases offer a rare, unrushed experience that beats the helter-skelter of multimedia entertainment.

"The timing of all those games is hectic. I think people have a longing for non-hectic things, too," says Ernst Storm, president of the non-profit International Panorama Council.

With panoramas, he adds, "you have the time to absorb the experience and to immerse in it on your own timetable."

Sanford Wurmfeld, an art professor at New York City's Hunter College has painted two abstract panoramas — Cyclorama 2000 and E-Cyclorama — which have been displayed in both Europe and the United States.

He says it is the absence of the digital sound and fury that makes wall paintings so enjoyable. Visitors do hear muffled cannon and gunfire in the background at the Waterloo panorama, but it's very low-tech compared to what you could experience on any home computer today.

"It is exactly in contrast to the Internet, video, and other 'hot media' that I think my panoramas take on their greatest function," he said in an email to The Associated Press.

"The new media tends to encourage passive viewing. I see painting as the ultimate example of the static medium which requires the most active participation by the viewer to experience it fully."

The panorama of the Battle of Waterloo is 100 metres long and almost 11 metres high. It was inaugurated in 1912. Since then the years have left a mark.

Leaking rainwater mars the soaring canvas in several places. The dimmed light cannot hide the dust covering life-sized soldiers and horses on the artificial terrain that blends into the painting.

Visitors to the area can also tour the actual battlefield, several museums and other attractions, including the Butte du Lion, or Lion Mound, an artificial hill with a view of the battlefield that was built as a monument to mark the spot where the Netherlands' Prince of Orange was wounded during the fight.

Travelling panoramas were popular across Europe in the 19th century, showing country folk exotic scenes of distant cities, landscapes and historical events. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

More details

- For information on the battlefield and nearby attractions, see waterloo-tourisme.be/uk/mtw.asp.

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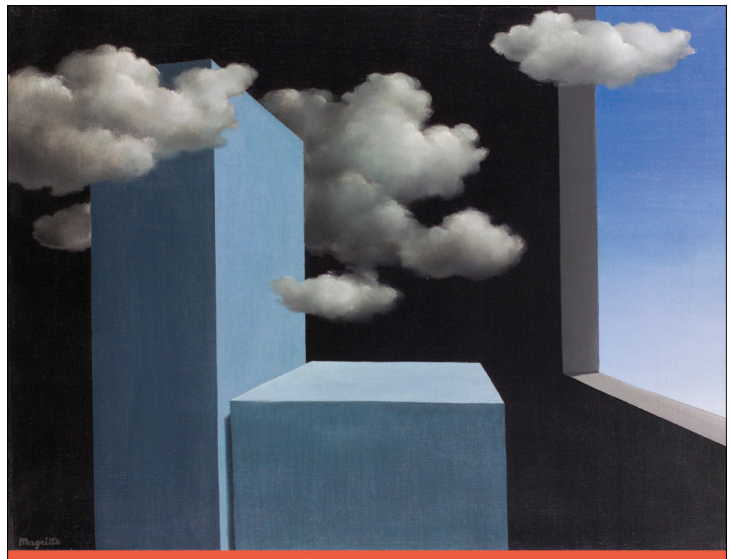

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René Magritte, *The Tempest*, 1931, oil on canvas. Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, CT. Bequest of Kay Sage Tanguy. © René Magritte / SODRAC (2009)

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Canada

Bike rental website helps travellers find options

Service works with 200 bike stores in U.S. and Canada

Renting a car is one way to see a new city, but for a real close-up — and a little exercise — how about renting a bike?

A website launched earlier this year, rentabikenow.com, helps travellers find two-wheeled transportation in 168 cities in the United States and Canada. It works with 200 bike stores — and counting, putting site users directly in touch with the rental inventory at independent bicycle stores large and small.

Users select the city where they're headed, and receive a list of available bikes from cruisers to mountain bikes. Some bike stores offer tandem and recumbent bikes, too.

It can be hard to find a bicycle to rent when you're going on a trip. Not all bike stores rent bikes, and hours, bicycle styles, and rental rates differ widely.

That is the need rentabikenow.com is aiming to address. It also collects surveys from every user to rate the stores and their service.

To rent a bicycle on rentabikenow.com, users pay a $5-$8 US fee, make a deposit, and then pay the balance when they pick up and use the bike.

The site also provides some mapping and route advice. And the bike listings show a photo of the bike users are reserving online, plus store shop hours.

All the bike stores must offer helmets, some rented, some free.

The cost of renting the bike itself usually runs about $40, said George Gill, the site's Chicago-based president and founder. Gill has seen rental charges that range from $15 to $100.

That means bike rental isn't always much more economical than renting a car.

But rolling down the street on two wheels instead of four is healthier, easier on the environment, and it's fun, noted Gill, 45, who himself rides about 6,400 kilometres a year for health and relaxation.

"It goes back to that fundamental sense of freedom," he said. "You're truly in touch with the world around you, whether that be nature or the local people in the town you're visiting."

"For me, it's a fantastic way to see a city up close. I get to spend time outside."
Winona Sorenson

Rentabikenow.com, launched in April, has agreements with 200 bicycle stores in 40 states, and Gill is hard at work looking for more.

The site has 20 rental locations in California, and 11 in Florida.

Renting a bike makes sense if you don't have the time or ability to ship your own bike where you're going, said Winona Sorenson at Adventure Cycling Association, a 44,000-member group aimed at inspiring people to travel on two wheels.

"For me, it's a fantastic way to see a city up close," Sorenson, media director of the Montana-based association, said of biking. "I get to spend time outside."

And if you travel by bike, you'll never have to hunt for a parking space again. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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MIKE FUHRMANN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Robert Opie's fascination with consumer products has resulted in a collection of half a million items, of which his 12,500 "favourites" are on display at his Museum of Brands, Packaging and Advertising in London's Notting Hill.

Brands Museum is an ode to consumer whims

Tiny London space shows off history of products

As a self-described "supermarket archeologist," Robert Opie saves many of the things that the rest of society throws out.

He picks up discarded candy bar wrappers from the street. He buys food products with no intention of actually eating them. And he appears frequently on British TV and radio as a historian of consumer culture and author of numerous books on the subject — he forgets precisely how many.

"I think it's 20," says the 61-year-old with owlish glasses who expounds at length, and with little prompting, on such topics as the shape of condiment containers and the texture of toilet paper.

"I've got another 200 inside me."

Opie's fascination with consumer products has resulted in a collection of half a million items, of which his 12,500 "favourites" are on display at his Museum of Brands, Packaging and Advertising in London's Notting Hill.

Crammed into a space not much bigger than a corner store are shampoos, soft drinks, toilet cleaners, toothpaste tubes, breakfast cereals, bottles of beer, cigarette packs, chocolate bars, bags of salty snacks, toys, record albums and just about every other conceivable type of consumer product. They're displayed chronologically, dating back to Victorian times.

From the vantage point of the 21st century, there are many oddities.

The Baby Daisy vacuum cleaner is a wood-and-canvas contraption from the first decade of the 20th century.

Ramsay's Medicated Spice Nuts, from an earlier era, are advertised as "the most pleasant, safe and certain remedy for eradicating every species of worms, cleansing the stomach and bowels of everything offensive, and for purifying the blood and correcting the habit."

But as Opie points out, 50 or 100 years from now people will probably consider some of today's consumer products just as bizarre. Which is one reason why he finds consumer culture "blindingly exciting."

"We are consumers from the moment we wake up to the moment we go to sleep. That makes our lives."

A tour through the museum is a nostalgia trip as visitors come across products — Opie calls them "old friends" — from earlier days. Some will remember Heinz Real Turtle Soup, Mackintosh's Ragtime Candy and Brownie cameras.

A 1930s display features a TV in a wooden console and tiny packs of Player's, Air Mail and Black Cat cigarettes. From the '50s there are monosyllabic detergents and household cleaners such as Daz, Surf, Tide, Fab and Flash ("No Rinsing! No Wiping Dry!").

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Photo: Glenn Cameron

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Run! Jump! Fly!
From Oct. 10 to Jan. 3, the Canadian Children's Museum in Gatineau, Que. will present an action-packed new exhibition called Run! Jump! Fly! Adventures in Action, which will inspire young people to get moving. See civilization.ca for further details. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Shanghai's towering presence

>> Continued from page 37

After this spiritual experience, you can try one of the Chinese snacks that are sold in the bazaar.

Accommodation

Shanghai encompasses both extreme luxury and poverty. If you've just won the lottery, you might opt to stay at the Marriott Hotel, where you can look out over the city from your bathtub. If you have less money to spend, you should stay on the other side of the river, in a budget-friendly hotel like the New Asia Hotel. It's not luxurious, but the rooms are tidy and a room for two costs only 25 euros a night.

Food and drinks

Tired of walking around all day? Grab a taxi — which are very cheap — and tell the driver you want to go to Xintiandi, which is a refurbished "longtang," or little lane of traditional Chinese houses.

There you can sit at an outdoor café and relax while you take in the cosy surroundings.

After that you don't have to go far to fill your stomach. There are plenty of mid-price restaurants with Chinese, French and Italian cuisine.

EUGENE HOSHIKO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A local shopper walks out from newly opened Gucci flagship shop in Shanghai.

Shopping

For a day of shopping, try the area around People's Square. At Nanjing Road, you'll find lots of shops and department stores. The large department stores sell expensive Western brands, but think twice before you load your shopping cart because prices are no lower than at home. For cheap souvenirs go to the bazaars near Yu Garden. In Shanghai Old Street there are lots of souvenir shops, where trinkets cost next to nothing.

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Vancouver art exhibit

From Oct. 17 to Jan. 17, the Vancouver Art Gallery will present an exhibition comparing the work of Canadian and American landscape artists in the period between the U.S. Civil War and the First World War. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Florida hotel targets snowbirds shopping for real estate

Package includes list of 'preferred realtors' guests can consult

An upscale Florida hotel is offering a package aimed at snowbirds shopping for real estate bargains.

The Fairmont Turnberry Isle Resort & Club, north of Miami, says its Future Floridian package includes a "preferred list of realtors" for guests to consult, a city of Aventura, Fla. guidebook, GPS to navigate South Florida's residential communities, and foot massages at the resort spa, along with accommodation.

If they end up buying a home, package holders also receive a Florida welcome gift, a resort stay discount for "future house guests," and a $3,000 US spending credit with the purchase of a membership at Turnberry Isle Resort & Golf Club.

More details

- For more details on the Future Floridian package at the Fairmont Turnberry Isle Resort & Club, visit fairmont.com/turnberryisle

Rates, based on a two-night minimum stay, start at $839 from Oct. 1 to Dec. 18; $1,389 from Dec. 19 to Jan. 4; and $1,019 from Jan. 5 through April 30.

The resort recently underwent a $130-million transformation.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Best river trips from National Geographic Adventure

ADVENTURE TRAVEL They're not the biggest rivers in the United States, or the best-known. But National Geographic Adventure is highlighting six wild and scenic rivers in the U.S. ideal for rafting trips. The magazine's August-September issue lists the rivers as:

- The Rogue River in Oregon, with rapids ranging from Class II to Class V and outfitters offering trips from three to six days.
- The Middle Fork of the Salmon River in Idaho, described as a "grail for experienced wilderness paddlers" that drops 2,133 metres from its headwaters through elk and bighorn sheep country.
- New Mexico's Rio Chama, a tributary of the Rio Grande with red-rock canyon walls and Class I and II rapids that make it ideal for young children and beginning paddlers.
- California's Upper Kern River, which has a sequence of five Class V rapids that only experienced riders can handle.
- The Chattooga River in Georgia and South Carolina, offering a steep 22-metre drop over less than half a kilometre.
- The Wolf River in Wisconsin, which includes a dozen Class II and III rapids on a 45-kilometre segment on the Menominee Indian Reservation, and a plunge over Smokey Falls, a Class III cascade with a 2.4-metre drop.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ulysses sells digital guides

BOOKS Travel guide publisher Ulysses is offering digital versions of its books for sale online. The books can be downloaded as PDF files, selling for about 75 per cent of the price of the paper versions, the Montreal-based publisher says.

Individual chapters can be downloaded for about $5 each. Ulysses says more than 100 English and French language titles covering destinations including Montreal, Costa Rica, Cuba and Western Canada are available online.

Other major publishers, including Frommer's and Fodor's, also provide travel material on the Internet, much of it for free.

For more information, visit ulyssesguides.com.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Pitt to voice superhero
Brad Pitt will be providing the voice for an animated feature in which he'll play a "superhero who wants out." Pitt says that movie will costar the voices of Tina Fey and Robert Downey Jr., and trade reports identify the project as Oobermind. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Entertainment

Dating Diaz

Cameron Diaz seems to have moved on after her split from model Paul Sculfor. She is reportedly dating Sex and the City actor Jason Lewis, according to Grazia magazine. METRO WORLD NEWS

EDITOR: DEAN.LISK@METRONEWS.CA

Roth taps rage, anger

Actor plays murderous soldier in Quentin Tarantino's Inglourious Basterds

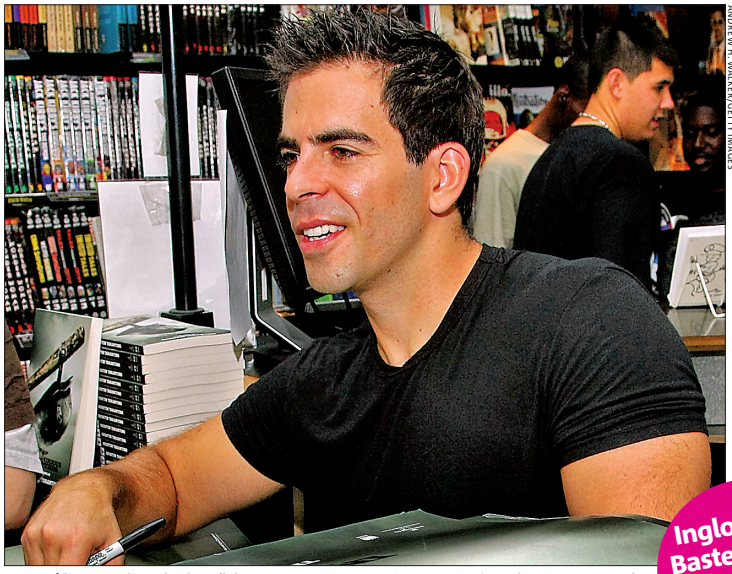
CHRIS ALEXANDER
for Metro Canada

As a terrified Nazi PoW kneels on the ground at gunpoint in front of a black, cavernous tunnel, a steady, rhythmic clanging sound of metal hitting brick begins filling the air. Suddenly a figure explodes outwards, a muscled brute wielding an aluminum baseball bat, swinging wildly for anything wearing a swastika.

The SS know him as "The Bear Jew." But we know him better as Eli Roth.

Roth is the outspoken writer/director behind such modern grindhouse hits as Cabin Fever, Hostel and its even bloodier sequel. But it's here, in Quentin Tarantino's latest film Inglourious Basterds, where Roth gets to flex his acting chops. He plays Sgt. Donny Donowitz — a.k.a. The Bear Jew — an angry, brain-bashing member of the titular band of merry Jewish-American Nazi hunters.

"When Quentin asked me to do this, I knew I had to make The Bear believable," says Roth of his first prominent acting gig (though he did have a credited role in Tarantino's 2007 effort Death Proof). "I put on 40 pounds of muscle. I wanted you to look at this guy and see all this murderous rage and pain and anger."



ANDREW H. WALKER/GETTY IMAGES

Writer/director Eli Roth plays "The Bear Jew" in Quentin Tarantino's Inglourious Basterds.

Inglourious Basterds is in theatres this Friday.

Inglourious Basterds is a pulp fantasy, following the exploits of various characters and their attempts to murder as many followers of the Third Reich as possible, including the Fuehrer himself. It madly shifts gears between muted character drama, cartoonish, gory action blowout and stylized spaghetti western and audiences who pre-screened the rough cut of the film at Cannes were either left mystified or completely enraptured.

But as Roth explains, the polarized reaction is typical of Tarantino's work.

"Pulp Fiction took general audiences three viewings to get it," he says. "At first they said it was morally reprehensible. The second time, it had its moments. The third time they claimed it a masterpiece.

"With Kill Bill Part One, some mourned the lack of great dialogue and said there was too much action. With Kill Bill 2 the same people said there was too much dialogue and not enough action. But with Basterds, I really think Quentin has made a landmark film.

"There are at least three scenes in it that students will be reading in acting class and really, you can't sell it in a 30 second TV spot. It's an experience."

Jackson to be buried next week

Jackson

PEOPLE The King of Pop will be buried on what would have been his 51st birthday, a spokesman for Michael Jackson's family said yesterday.

Jackson will be buried at a private ceremony at Forest Lawn-Glendale on Aug. 29, spokesman Ken Sunshine said in a statement. Guests will be limited to family and close friends, Sunshine said.

"The Jackson family once again wishes to express its gratitude to Michael's fans around the world for their support during these difficult times, the statement said. Details about the ceremony and the whereabouts of Jackson's body have been tightly guarded. The announcement came a day after the New York Daily News reported comments by Jackson's father, Joe Jackson, that his son would be buried on what would have been his birthday. Sunshine said he will be buried on the Holly Terrace at the cemetery's Great Mausoleum.

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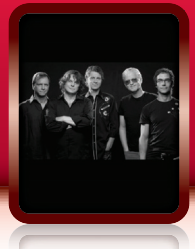

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Kidman's new Project

Nicole Kidman is to appear on Project Runway: All Star Challenge. The actress will make a guest appearance on a special episode of the U.S. reality and set the contestants one of their sewing tasks. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

New Dawn for punk-popstar Avril

JANINE FALCON
for Metro Canada

Jamie Katzman, owner and president of the Boathouse chain of clothing stores, is pretty chuffed.

He's got the Canadian exclusive on Abbey Dawn, a colourful line of punk-inspired casualwear from multi-platinum award-winning singer/songwriter Avril Lavigne.

"It just sort of happened," he told Metro when the line debuted in his downtown-Toronto store earlier this week. "We were introduced through a friend of a friend. I was familiar with Avril's line, and heard that she knew and had shopped at Boathouse... and a few months later, I'm standing with her in the store at the launch."

"I'm excited to have my clothes at Boathouse — it's a good match," said Lavigne, who was on hand to introduce Abbey Dawn (her childhood nickname) and meet with 50 fans who had won tickets to the launch via a Boathouse contest. She describes her line as "rock 'n' roll, playful and fun," a mix-and-match collection of her personal style. "You can throw on the skinny jeans with heels, a Chanel bag, mix it with Betsey Johnson — it's fun, fashion is fun," she said.

"I like that she wears her own label. A lot of celebrities design clothing but don't wear their stuff."
Alyssa Chin, fan

Youthful and bold in the singer's favourite colours — black, white, red, hot pink and purple — the clothes are exactly what one might expect of Lavigne: An exuberant mix of prep-school-gone-punk graphic tees, cropped vests, short plaid kilts, skinny jeans, edgy-cute accessories, and hoodies, lots of hoodies. "I pretty much wear hoodies every day," she said. In fact, her day's ensemble of choice was her own Abbey Dawn "I Always Get What I Want" hoody and black leggings. "I don't want to jinx it!" she exclaimed when asked whether she does actually always get what she wants.

"I like that she wears her own label," said Alyssa Chin, 20, who was at the event with her sister, Kamille, 23, a contest winner. "A lot of celebrities design clothing but don't wear their stuff. It's good Avril does."

Although Abbey Dawn has until now been available only south of the border, Lavigne was not the only launch attendee wearing her clothes. Aren Adamian, 16, "a fan since day one," was kitted out in a black-and-white Abbey Dawn hoody and plaid shorts he'd picked up at the U.S. retailer Kohl's. (According to Lavigne, many of her guy friends are already pestering her to start designing for them. She's thinking about it, and points to certain pieces, like the hoodies, as already appropriate for unisex wear.)

GETTY IMAGES

Abbey Dawn is the fashion line from multi-platinum award-winning singer/songwriter Avril Lavigne. Safety Pin Tee, left, $24.99.

At the moment, Lavigne says she's working on dresses and other items she'll roll out later in the year. "There'll be new offerings every six to eight weeks," confirmed Katzman.

Abbey Dawn ranges in price from $14.99 for accessories to $59.99 for a soft hooded blazer, and is currently available at 15 of Katzman's 37 Boathouse locations (boathousestores.com). It'll be in the rest of the stores in November — and psst! the dresses are slated for the holiday collection, which should launch around then, too.

• Check out tomorrow's Style section for more pieces from Lavigne's line.

Is it a fashion nightmare or an inspirational message?

STYLE Valerie Elizabeth is subjecting herself to any good fashionista's nightmare: She's getting up every morning this month and putting on the same dress.

The Dallas stylist wants to show how easy it is to look glamorous on a budget. She's aiming to have a new look each day with one little black dress and some creative accessories - belts, shoes, scarves, jewelry and even jeans.

Elizabeth said her Little Black Dress Experiment, which she's documenting at societystylist.com, helps her reach more people with the advice she's found herself giving women on a budget: Take a good look in your closet and get creative with the pieces you already have.

"If I'm telling people this, I should show that I can do this too," she said.

So she set out with a versatile little black dress — actually two identical Elli Grace dresses, so she has time to wash them — and started digging in her closet. So far she's worn the dress to everything from a performance at the House of Blues to media interviews to a visit to an arcade with her son on a day she had paired the dress with a pair of steep Prada wedges — "I certainly was the most dressed up," she said.

And while she's not necessarily forswearing any new purchases this month, so far she's found most outfits came from items she already owned.

Each day she posts on her websites a picture of herself, a listing of everything she's wearing, how much it cost, where you can buy it and where she wore it that day. She said she's made an effort to put together outfits that wouldn't necessarily be her personal style just to give people inspiration.

She's found she can dress it up with heels and jewelry and dress it down with flip-flops or jeans.

"It's been a challenge to see how many things I can put together," she said.

Lamarr Nanton, who designs Elli Grace along with Sojung Yang, said he's been logging on to Elizabeth's website each day to see what she's created. He expects her task to get harder as the month wears on: "I can't wait to see how it ends."

Elizabeth, who charges hourly to help people develop a personal style, said that as a dedicated outlet and thrift shopper, she's been well-equipped to deal with the economic downturn.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Valerie Elizabeth

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Lopez a different person
Jennifer Lopez admits she's a totally different person since giving birth to twins. "There's nothing as huge as giving birth to another human being and having to be responsible for another life," Lopez said. POPEATER.COM

Dion pregnant with twin 8 years later

Pop singer had fertilized eggs frozen at fertility clinic in New York

Celine Dion declared years ago that she had fertilized eggs at a New York fertility clinic — one would soon be born, and his "twin" would be stored there for awhile.

Now, eight years later, Dion's long-awaited second child finally appears set to arrive.

The pop superstar and her husband are rejoicing that the couple will have their second baby in May after undergoing fertility treatments at a New York clinic.

"Celine is very, very happy," Murielle Blondeau, a spokeswoman with the Bureau de Francine Chaloult, which handles media relations for the singer in Quebec, said Tuesday.

"Celine and Rene are full of joy. It's been a big dream for Celine to have a second child."

The sex of the baby was not immediately known. It was also not immediately clear whether it was the same embryo Dion spoke about in a television interview eight years ago.

In 2000, Dion told an interviewer that she was pregnant with her first child, Rene-Charles. She added that Rene-Charles already had a sibling in the works.

"I have a twin. It is called a laboratory twin," Dion said in the interview.

"I do not know if it is good forever but I think it lasts for a very long time. I will go get it, that's for sure."

"I have a twin. It is called a laboratory twin. I do not know if it is good forever but I think it lasts for a very long time. I will go get it, that's for sure."
Celine Dion, in an interview in 2000

Dr. Seang Lin Tan, a world-renowned fertility expert at the McGill University Reproductive Centre, said frozen embryos can be kept for years before they are used. While the first and second child may be siblings, he said, it's wrong to call them twins.

He noted that Dion's last pregnancy caused a spike in interest in the procedure. Dion's first child, Rene-Charles, started private school this week in Florida. Dion, 41, is the youngest of 14 children.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

GETTY IMAGES

Canadian singer Celine Dion is pregnant with her second child.

Jewel insists she hasn't turned her back on her hometown

CONCERT Jewel would like to set the record straight: She did not bail on Alaskans when two shows were cancelled many years ago. And, yes, she'll certainly show up at concerts scheduled this week.

"I was on tour on both occasions already and I've never double-booked anything in my life,'' she says of long-standing reports that she cancelled a New Year's Eve concert to ring in 2000 as well as an appearance at the Alaska State Fair in 1996, when she was touring with Neil Young.

The 35-year-old singer-songwriter, born Jewel Kilcher, said she was never booked for the shows by her agency that she knew of and was surprised when people asked about her going to Alaska. It bothers her that so many Alaskans believe she abandoned the shows — some airing their resentments quite vociferously.

Her Alaska roots made "a creative, independent, freethinking woman," says Jewel, who was 6 when she began performing with her father in her hometown of Homer. After leaving Alaska, she was living in a van in San Diego before vaulting from obscurity with her 1995 debut album, Pieces of You, and hits like You Were Meant for Me and Who Will Save Your Soul.

Jewel has recorded seven other albums since, the latest a collection of mostly original lullabies released in May. She's currently working on a second country album — the first, Perfectly Clear, debuted at No. 1 on Billboard's charts last year — as well as a second book of poetry.

"I consider myself a product of Alaska," she says in a telephone interview from the 2,000-acre ranch in Stephenville, Texas, that she shares with her husband, rodeo star Ty Murray. "The love and the debt that I feel to my home state — you always want your hometown to be the proudest of you and so it's heartbreaking to hear people say snarky things."

Alaskans rushed to bash her in response to a small blurb in newspapers announcing the concerts, many still seething at the perception that Jewel turned her back on the state when she became famous. Jewel is set to perform at a benefit in Homer on Wednesday to raise money for a local program for young artists, following the next two nights with performances at Anchorage's Atwood Concert Hall.

"She burned this bridge a long time ago. Take a hike, Jewel!" wrote one online reader of the Anchorage Daily News.

Rene King, who grew up in Homer, remembers Jewel singing at school assemblies. King, who now lives in Anchorage, is not a fan even though she calls the singer's voice beautiful. As far as she's concerned, Jewel has done Alaska wrong.

Jewel

"When she progressed in her career, I just think she betrayed the state," she said.

Ticket sales for the Anchorage concerts aren't exactly flying out of the box office. About half of the tickets for the 2,000-seat Atwood have been sold for the two nights, says local promoter Dan Fiacco. Tickets are $50.50, with 50 cents going to Project Clean Water, a charity Jewel started in 1997.

"Alaskans don't let go of grudges very easily," Fiacco said.

The hometown folks in Homer are more forgiving. People quickly snapped up the 450 available tickets for the benefit at the town's high school theatre.

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Osbourne "terrified"
Kelly Osbourne, who is joining Dancing With the Stars, says she is "terrified." METRO NEWS SERVICES

Southern Vampires

True Blood is the small screen equivalent of Twilight

Vampires are more in than ever: After the roaring success of the Twilight series, True Blood is having the same effect, only on the small screen.

The HBO series is based on The Southern Vampire Mysteries books, written by Charlaine Harris. She has already penned nine volumes on the series, which looks at the experiences and dark love of Sookie Stackhouse — played by Anna Paquin in the TV series.

Metro World News recently sat down with Harris to talk about the growing interests in TV and film vampires.

Actress Anna Paquin stars as Sookie Stackhouse in the HBO series True Blood.

Q You started the Sookie Stackhouse books back in 2001 before the big vampire craze. Why were you interested in vampires, and why have you dedicated a whole series to them?

A The series is actually about the young human woman who is dating a vampire. I thought that would be a more interesting approach. It seemed to be that it would be interesting to write about characters who are so different from humans, who have seen so much history.

Q Why do you think the topic of vampires became so popular so sudden?

A I am sure the Twilight series had something to do with it, but actually this has been building for the past ten years or so.

Q You write other series also featuring girls with superpowers. What interests you in these characters?

A I don't really think of them as having superpowers; they have more like a disability. Sookie is telepathic, and that is a great burden. Harper had to be struck by lightning before she became able to find corpses. Though she makes her living doing that, it's not a pleasant way of life.

Q What makes a good book for you? What do you like to read in your freetime?

A I love to be engrossed in the story the writer is telling. I love to read, and I read many, many writers. I read some mystery, I read some science fiction, I read a little romance and a little non-fiction.

Q How would your ideal vampire look like? What attracts people in vampires?

A I don't have an ideal vampire. I think people are fascinated by the eternal vigor of vampires, who don't age.

Q How much do you read weekly? Where is your ideal reading spot?

A I read three or four books a week. I can read anywhere, but I have a comfortable chair in our bedroom and one in our family room; both of these are good for reading.

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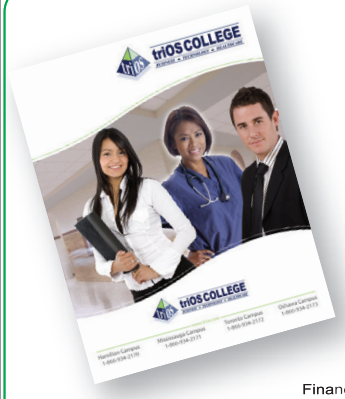

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Ashton goes wild in Vegas

Ashton Kutcher has left his mark on Las Vegas. While in Sin City last weekend to celebrate the 21st birthday of stepdaughter Rumer Willis, Kutcher spray painted the likeness of a slot machine atop part of the Planet Hollywood Resort and Casino. **PEOPLE.COM**

Opera stars channel their pop power

When Danielle de Niese goes on her frequent international tours, she carries a visa listing her occupation as Opera Singer. Customs officials usually react with disbelief: "But you don't look like an opera singer!"

At 30, de Niese, slim and gorgeous, is one of today's hottest opera stars.

"There have always been beautiful opera singers," she points out. "But today we live in a very visual age. As an opera singer, you have to be able to both sing and act, and there's always someone who records the performance and puts it on YouTube."

Such performances are worth watching, even on YouTube; today's new opera stars defy people's notion of opera as a boring art form performed by fat, old singers. Perhaps that's why Vanity Fair recently featured a photo spread of several opera stars, and Playboy let readers vote on the "hottest classical babe."

MARTY SOHL/METROPOLITAN OPERA

Erwin Schrott

"30 years ago, opera singers didn't work out, but today going to the gym is often as important to them as going to rehearsals," explains Sarah Billinghurst, the assistant manager in charge of artistic programming at the Metropolitan Opera in New York.

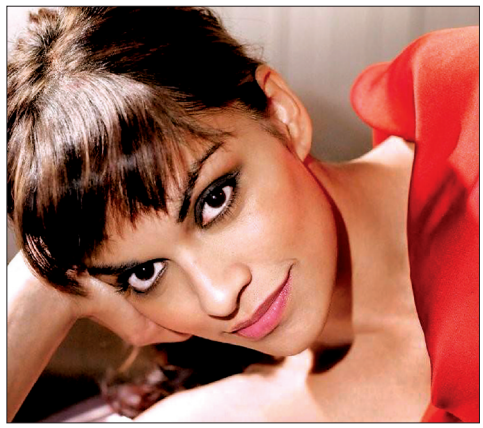
"Today there are many fabulous singers who also look fantastic on stage. And female singers, in particular, are very sophisticated about how they look on stage and in photo shoots."

De Niese, a Dutch-Sri Lankan who was born in Australia, is no opera nerd: As a teenager in Los Angeles, she danced and hosted a TV show for teenagers.

"I had many career options, but classical music is like a love affair," she says. "And opera has the potential to reach huge audiences. It touches you whether you have a music degree or not."

Especially if the performers are gorgeous.

METRO WORLD NEWS



CHRIS DUNLOP

No fat ladies here: Opera star Danielle de Niese says in such a visual age, modern opera singers must finely groom their images.

Not your average teen heartthrob

Some other supremely talented, gorgeous opera singers:

- Who's David Beckham compared to Uruguayan bass Erwin Schrott (seen above left)?
- Schrott's wife is Anna Netrebko (annanetrebko.com) of Russia, today's leading soprano.
- Evgeny Nikitin is a tattoo-covered Russian bass-baritone who also performs in a heavy-metal band.
- Lisette Aropresa is an American mezzo-soprano (and Vanessa Hudgens look-alike).
- Italian bass-baritone Luca Pisaroni.

Spears on Letterman
Britney Spears hasn't appeared on The Late Show in nearly three years, but Tuesday she'll deliver one of the show's classic bits: the Top 10 list. Spears last appeared on David Letterman's show when she made a surprise cameo in November 2006. PEOPLE.COM

In brief

TIFF Actor Michael Caine, comedian Chris Rock and Canadian director Atom Egoyan are among the stars set to get intimate with fans at the Toronto International Film Festival. Caine and Rock have signed on to the Mavericks showcase, in which industry types appear onstage before audiences for Q-and-A's about their latest projects at the festival.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

UN Kyoto meeting will screen Canadian film

A meeting of the United Nations later this year where world leaders will discuss a possible successor to the Kyoto Protocol will include a screening of a Canadian documentary.

The Antarctica Challenge: A Global Warning, written and directed by Mark Terry, is to be showcased at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Copenhagen this December.

Terry said in a statement that he feels honoured to have his film played at the meeting, which is to be attended by nearly 190 world leaders and ministers, and some 11,000 delegates.

Trailer

- Plans are also underway to have the documentary's trailer shown on a giant video screen in the centre of Copenhagen.

The documentary explores new discoveries about the ozone layer, diminishing populations of penguins and other marine life, the greening of the world's largest desert, and global warming.

"Of all the canaries in the climate coal mine, the polar regions and the mountain glaciers are singing the hardest and the loudest," said Achim Steiner, executive director of the UN Environment Programme, in a statement.

"Mark Terry's new climate change documentary ... underlines these realities with some of the latest and increasingly sobering scientific findings."
THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Mila only has eyes for Macaulay

Mila Kunis says dating Macaulay Culkin was well timed. "I don't know if I met him at 27 if it would have been a different relationship," she told Women's Health. PEOPLE.COM

Changes afoot at specialty channels

It's not easy being special. At least not for several Canadian specialty TV channels that find themselves in the midst of an identity shift these days.

PHOTOS.COM

Get ready for a TV shakeup — Canadian specialty channels such as Scream and VisionTV are changing names and directions.

Changes afoot include a broader, more female-oriented outlook for the horror movie channel Scream, which will be renamed Dusk in September when it tones down its slash-and-gore fare, and dialled-down luxe for The Fine Living channel, which will soon be replaced by the more modest DIY Network. Meanwhile, the religious VisionTV has its eyes on courting a less dogmatic — and even atheist — crowd as it prepares to join Moses Znaimer's Zoomer-Media Ltd.

Observers point to an ever-widening array of competition, a fractured audience and a brutal economy as making it tough for some niche channels to break through and find audiences.

"At the outset there was a ton of (specialty channels) that were licensed and were put out there and some of them garnered some audience and some of them didn't," notes advertising executive Fred Forster, president of PHD Canada.

"Those that had too small a niche audience can't get any advertising and can't get any subscriptions. People are shifting gears and saying, 'How do I find a niche that can generate more?'"

For VisionTV, that means expanding the multifaith channel's outlook to reflect society's changing cultures and religions.

Programming executive Mark Prasuhn says upcoming shows this fall and winter will include debates on creationism and Charles Darwin's theory of evolution, exposes on celebrity spirituality and a panel discussion including atheist Richard Dawkins.

"We're trying to move with the times, I guess, and move with Canadian society and provide an offering that has a lot of breadth to it," he says.

"In a sense, I guess I hope we have a religious channel that an atheist might watch and enjoy."

The new direction includes a call for three original scripted programs to anchor a primetime lineup dominated by vintage British comedies and reruns.

Over on the horror channel Scream, a redesigned schedule will shift the focus from a targeted audience of 55 per cent male to 55 per cent female, says marketing vice president Jim Johnson.

"We see what's happening in the industry with respect to movie franchises like Twilight, and we're a 50 per cent owner in HBO Canada and we see the success of shows like, True Blood, so we know that there is a broad appeal for those types of movies and series and we're looking to leverage that," says Johnson, referring to two vampire-themed shows that female viewers resonated with.

As of Sept. 9, Dusk viewers can expect to see films that rely less on slash-and-gore and lean more towards supernatural, suspense and thrillers.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

TO	Vu	SC	C	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
primetime 8/19/09	265	353	2 TVO	Expedition: Guyana		*Wal-Town: The Film*		(9:10) The Street		Human Edge		*Wal-Town*
	211	331	3 GTV	ET Canada	Entertainment	Bones		Wipeout (HDTV)		In Plain Sight "Jailbait"		News
	215	343	4 OMN1	Two/Half Men	The Simpsons	Omni News: Italian Edition (N)		Vivere Il	Omni News:	The Simpsons	King of the Hill	Metropia
	210	302	6 CBC	Coronation St.	Jeopardy!	Dragon's Den (HDTV)		The Tudors (DVS)		CBC News: The National		The Hour
	214	344	7 CITY	Law & Order: SVU		Who Wants to Be a Millionaire		Murdoch Mysteries (HDTV)		Murdoch Mysteries (HDTV)		News
	212	313	8 CTV	etalk	Hollywood	So You Think You Can Dance Canada Finals week. (N)				CSI: NY (HDTV)		News
	218	345	11 E!	The Insider (N)	E! News	Psych		D. Richards	Kendra	Women on Top	Women on Top	News/Eleven
	137	763	13 TFO	Panorama été	Météo	Rebut global	Villages	*Oxhide* (2005, Drame)				Météo
	-	-	14 -	Raymond	According-Jim	Omni News: S. Asian Edition		Omni News: Cantonese Edition		Two/Half Men	King	Cold Case
	213	326	15 SUN	Stargate SG-1		*To Have and to Hold* (2006, Suspense) Justine Bateman.				To Serve and Protect		Becker
	-	387	16 CBS	Inside Edition	Hollywood	Old Christine	Gary Unmarr	Criminal Minds (HDTV)		CSI: NY (HDTV)		News 4 at 11
	-	385	17 NBC	The Insider (N)	Entertainment	America's Got Talent (N)		America's Got Talent		Law & Order: SVU		News
	-	386	18 ABC	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy!	Who Wants to Be a Millionaire		Wipeout (HDTV)		Primetime: Crime (N)		News
	219	346	20 ACH-B	The Road to Avonlea		America's Got Talent (N)		America's Got Talent		Law & Order: SVU		A News
	-	-	28 FOX	Judge Judy	Two/Half Men	Octomom: The Incredible Unseen Footage (N)				Seinfeld	Two/Half Men	The Simpsons
	-	388	61 PBS	News-Lehrer	Wait for God	Time Team Special Edition (HDTV) (N)				Wide Angle (N)		Business Rpt.
	297	652	330 WPX	Two/Half Men	Family Guy	America's Next Top Model		America's Next Top Model		PIX News at Ten Tong.		Two/Half Men
	296	654	331 SBK	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy!	Dr. Phil (HDTV)		WBZ News (N)	What's-Store	Frasier	Frasier	Punk'd
	298	653	332 TLA	Jamie Foxx	Wayans Bros.	My Wife-Kids	According-Jim	Friends	KTLA News	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	Next Model
news	502	390	26 NW	CBC News	Fortune	The Hour		CBC News: The National		Struck by Lightning		National
	500	500	33 CNN	Lou Dobbs Tonight		Campbell Brown (N)		Larry King Live (N)		Anderson Cooper 360 (HDTV)		
	509	504	79 CNB	Kudlow Report		Crime & Punishment		Fastest Growing Companies		American Greed		Mad Money
sports	405	417	22 net	MLB Baseball Boston Red Sox at Toronto Blue Jays. From Rogers Centre in Toronto.						Sportsnet Con.	Sportsnet Con.	Sportsnet Con.
	400	400	30 TSN	Interruption	WTA Tennis Rogers Cup -- Day Three. (HDTV) From Toronto. (Live)					SportsCentre (HDTV) (Live)		
	411	457	58 OLN	Ghost Hunters		Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Survivorman		Ghost Hunters		Bounty Hunter
	417	406	81 SC	NASCAR Racing		NCWTS Setup	NASCAR Racing	Camping World Truck Series -- O'Reilly 200. (HDTV) (Live)				Pimp My Ride
family	551	542	25 YTV	In Real Life		Malcolm-Mid.	Futurama	Survive This	Adrenaline Proj	Falcon Beach		Mystery Hnt.
	554	544	45 TEL	Jimmy Two	Total Drama	6TEEN	6TEEN	Futurama	American Dad	Robot Chicken	Father of Pride	Moral Orel
	556	540	51 FAM	Wizards-Place	Han. Montana	Zack & Cody	Latest Buzz	Wizards-Place	Life Derek	Ned's School	Cory in House	Zack & Cody
cable variety	602	567	27 W	Style by Jury	Friends	Grocery Bag	Grocery Bag	Love It or List It		*Killer Hair* (2009, Mystery) Maggie Lawson.		
	570	580	29 MM	One Tree Hill		Degrassi: TNG	Instant Star	Making His Band		Video on Trial	Degrassi: TNG	Video on Trial
	615	520	31 A&E	CSI: Miami "Nailed"		Dog the Bounty Hunter		Dog the Bounty Hunter		Criss Angel Mindfreak		Criss Angel
	700	800	35 TLN	Centrovetrine	Sky TG 24	Madame				Raymond	Raymond	George Lopez
	571	581	36 MMM	The Daily Fix		Ranked!		mmtop10.ca		Entourage	Gene Simmons	The Daily Fix
	575	583	38 CMT	Project Dad	Project Dad	Home Improve.	Home Improve.	Reba	Reba	Hope & Faith	Hope & Faith	Corb Lund Live
	616	521	39 SHO	The Outer Limits		The Guard "Wake"		*The Party Never Stops* (2007, Drama) Sara Paxton.				House
	620	523	40 BVO	The Achievers	Bravo!Videos	Arts & Minds	O'Reagan File	Wingfield	Wingfield	Cooperman Howard Engel		Law & Order
	601	562	41 SLC	Skin Deep	Til Debt-Part	End of Leash	End of Leash	End of Leash	End of Leash	End of Leash	End of Leash	ET Canada
	522	506	43 HIS	NCIS "Leap of Faith"		Cities of the Underworld		Ice Road Truckers		NCIS "Leap of Faith"		Turning Points
	625	548	44 COM	Air Farce	22 Minutes	22 Minutes	Corner Gas	The Simpsons	South Park	Jon Dore Show	Tosh.0	Daily Show
	600	564	46 H&G	House Hunters	Property Virgin	Big City Broker	The Stagers	Property Virgin	Hid Potential	House Hunters	House Hunters	Holmes-Homes
	294	529	47 TBS	Family Guy	Family Guy	*Trading Places* ★★ (1983, Comedy) Dan Aykroyd, Eddie Murphy.					Seinfeld	*Trading Places*
	576	582	49 BET	106 & Park	Access	*Nora's Hair Salon* (2004, Comedy) Jenifer Lewis.				The Game	The Game	W. Williams
	627	528	50 SPC	Stargate Atlantis (DVS)		Star Trek: Voyager		Primeval		Stormworld (N)	Stormworld (N)	Stargate SG-1
	581	566	52 MTV	MTV Cribs	After	MTV News	Cribs	The Real World		The Real World (N)		MTV Live
	618	524	54 TROP	The Crow: Stairway to Heaven		What Happen?	What Happen?	Deal or No Deal Canada		Raymond	Raymond	Raymond
	603	561	56 FOOD	Chef at Home	Fresh-Anna	Restaurant Makeover		Iron Chef America		The Next Food Network Star		Opening Soon
	261	394	60 V	Murder, She Wrote		Keeping Up	Foot in Grave	Doc Martin		Recreat. Eden	Prenup	Poltergeist
	621	527	63 STR	The Ellen DeGeneres Show		TMZ (N)	etalk	Canada's Next Top Model		Tonight Show-Conan O'Brien		TMZ
	553	546	65 TRE	Backyardigans	Nght Grdn	Max & Ruby	Franklin	Little Bear	Bucket-Dinos	Comfy Couch	Big & Small	Max & Ruby
	115	711	101 TVA	Les Gags	Histoires-filles	Les Anges de la rénovation		Mollie (HDTV) (SC)		TVA 22 heures	Sucré-salé	*8 Mile* (SC)
	126	730	102 RDI	24 Heures en 60 minutes		Grands reportages (SC)		Le Téléjournal (SC)		RDI économie	Le National	Le Téléjournal
	526	507	249 VIVA	Judging Amy		Medium		The Closer		Mediums	Psychic Detect	Mediums
	300	601	301 M1	*In the Electric Mist* ★ (2009, Mystery) Tommy Lee Jones.				*Nick and Norah's Infinite Playlist* (2008)			(10:45) *Nights in Rodanthe*	
	305	612	306 PIX	(7:10) *Exotica* ★★★ (1994, Drama), Mia Kirshner				*K-19: The Widowmaker* ★★ (2002, Suspense) Harrison Ford.				

critics'corner

Capturing Cooperman: A Not So Private Investigation of Howard Engel

You can't keep a good mind down. The creator of fictional crime drama character Benny Cooperman, Engel captured the public's imagination for over two decades. In 2001, he had a stroke that left him unable to read. Determined to keep Cooperman alive, Engel began the process of learning to read and write all over again. This documentary tells his story. 10 PM on BVO

Wal-Town: The Film

It seems as if every year, there is a community protest somewhere in the United States about the potential building of a chain store. Just because the U.S. seems preoccupied with this doesn't mean that Canadians should not have an opinion. This documentary takes a look at the Wal-Mart store chain and its effect on Canadian communities — and how some residents are protesting its presence in the country. 8 PM on TVO

Sports dominates Sunday's ratings

BY THE NUMBERS Y.E. Yang's upset win over Tiger Woods in the PGA Championship was a television hit that even picked up more viewers for an interview with quarterback Michael Vick.

Nielsen Media Research says its overnight measurements of big cities found ratings for the golf tournament up 150 per cent over 2008. Woods was injured and didn't play in the tournament last year.

Nielsen and CBS don't yet have an estimate of the audience nationally. In the metered markets, it was the best PGA final round since 2002.

The tournament led directly into 60 Minutes, which featured Vick's interview about his prison time for running a dogfighting operation. CBS estimates more than 11 million people tuned in, up from a usual eight million. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kenya's Style

Kenya Hunt

Read the blog at metronews.ca/kenyasstyle

Jessica's fill-in Idol gig a fib
Jessica Simpson isn't trying to fill Paula Abdul's vacant judge's seat on American Idol. The New York Post reported Monday that the singer's father Joe is pushing producers to cast Simpson. But Simpson's rep said, "There is absolutely no truth to this." USMAGAZINE.COM

Celebrity Buzz

Kristen: Me, a style icon?

FASHIONISTA Kristen Stewart says she isn't important enough to get free designer clothes, female-first.co.uk reports.

The Twilight actress, who is known for her glamorous gothic style, wishes she could keep the gowns she wears to red-carpet events.

She said: "The really cool stuff — I never get to keep any of that. Like anything for an event or anything like that. I'm just not important enough yet, I think."

Stewart — who has previously graced the red carpet in creations by Yigal Azrouel, Hervé Léger and Camilla and Marc — admits she finds it "bizarre" that her fans are copying the clothes she wears.

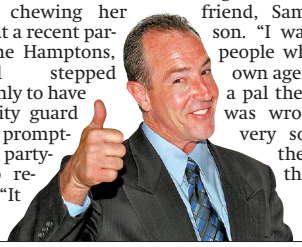
The 19-year-old told Entertainment Weekly: "Those things like sweatshirts and jackets, those things are mine, which is bizarre to have people go out and buy."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Dad apologizes to Lindsay?

EATING HIS WORDS Lindsay Lohan just can't seem to shake her dad, Michael Lohan, according to the New York Post.

After chewing her ear off at a recent party in the Hamptons, Michael stepped away, only to have a security guard step in, prompting one partygoer to remark, "It looks like he's stalking her."



Turns out he was just trying to tell her he was wrong to bash Lindsay's on-again, off-again girlfriend, Samantha Ronson. "I was misled by people who had their own agenda," he told a pal the next day. "I was wrong and I'm very sorry. I wish the best for them."

METRO WORLD NEWS

Scott a changed man: Khloe says

LIFE-CHANGING EVENT In light of Kourtney Kardashian's pregnancy, her sister Khloe says the baby's father, 25-year-old Scott Disick, has changed.

Though the couple split in February after she suspected him of cheating, "he's always been obsessed with Kourtney," Khloe told usmagazine.com.

These days, "He's more — well, I don't know if a man can be maternal, but he's definitely becoming more maternal," Khloe added. ("Paternal," Kourtney, 30, corrected her.)

Kourtney added that she isn't sure they'll wed.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

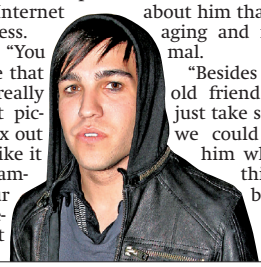
Pete debuts baby Bronx online

OVERPROTECTIVE? Pete Wentz has backtracked on his promise to keep his young son out of the spotlight — posting a photo of baby Bronx online after previously vowing not to show off the tot, female-first.co.uk reports.

The musician and his wife, Ashlee Simpson-Wentz, refused to sell pictures of Bronx Mowgli to any magazines after he was born in November, despite being offered "mounds and mounds of money by mags to pimp out the baby," according to Wentz.

The rocker even banned personal photos of Bronx from his blog — but now he has published a snap to prove the Internet can be harmless.

He writes, "You know I wrote that I didn't really want to post pictures of Bronx out there. I feel like it would be damaging to our family and besides, he's not old enough to decide if he wants to be an avatar or not.



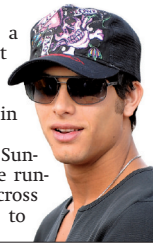
"But the truth is I want him to know there is other stuff out there on the web about him that isn't damaging and is just normal.

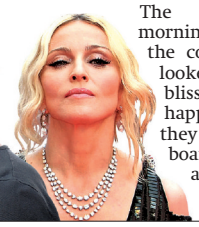
"Besides we had an old friend come and just take some pics so we could remember him when he was this lil. He's blonde now."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Jesus, love of Madonna's life

GOOD MATCH Madonna says Jesus Luz is "the love of her life," femalefirst.co.uk reports. The singer praised the 22-year-old Brazilian model in a speech at her 51st birthday party in Portofino, Italy, on Sunday before running across the room to passionately kiss him.





As friends looked on, Madonna gushed: "He's the love of my life. He has been so strong around me. I can't thank him enough."

The next morning, the couple looked blissfully happy as they boarded a luxury yacht with Madonna's children — Lourdes, 12, Rocco, eight, Mercy, four, and David, three.

As the children relaxed on the deck, the pop superstar and her lover frolicked in the ocean.

An onlooker said: "She and Jesus looked madly in love and it was great to see her looking so happy. They just looked like any normal family enjoying a holiday together."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Grey's star nude tape leaked online

ON THE DEFENCE A video showing Grey's Anatomy star Eric Dane, his wife Rebecca Gayheart and another women in apparently compromising positions is ancient history and had better not be used for commercial purposes, warns an attorney for the married couple, people.com reports.

In a statement released Monday, the actor's lawyer, Marty Singer, said the tape "is simply a private, consensual moment involving a married couple, shot several years ago, which was never intended to be seen by the public."

The statement continued: "Although the participants are nude, the tape is not a 'sex tape.' It is a private tape made for only my clients' personal use, and nobody has the right to exploit it. If anyone exploits the tape, they will be violating my clients' rights and will be exposed to significant liability."

The third woman in the video reportedly is Kari Ann Peniche, who in 2002 was crowned Miss Teen USA but was later stripped of the title after posing for Playboy.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Tori declares end to family feud?

BURY THE HATCHET The feud between 90210 star Tori Spelling and her mother has been waged for months in the press, but Tori is ready to bury the hatchet once and for all.

The daughter of Aaron and Candy Spelling recently told OK! Magazine: "I definitely want to reconcile with my mother, but that's the wrong word. There's nothing that really happened that made us fight. It's just time, distance and media that have come between my mom and me."

GETTY IMAGES

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Dancing host wants Paula's dressing room

QUICK, WHILE IT'S WARM Now that Paula Abdul has left American Idol, Dancing With the Stars host Samantha Harris wants her dressing room. (American Idol is filmed at the same studio as Dancing.)

"In past seasons when Dancing wasn't going on at the same time as Idol, I would have Paula's dressing room, and it's fabulous," Harris told a Phoenix radio station. "It's a really cute, big pink dressing room. I should start putting my name in for it now... Maybe I'll get the dressing room finally."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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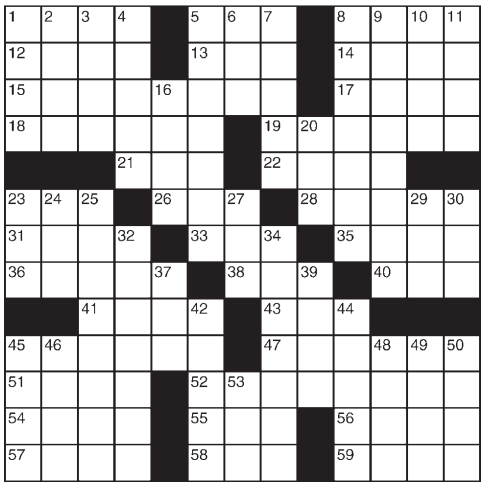

ACROSS

1 Spacecraft compartments
5 Scatter seed
8 Couple, to TMZ
12 Neighbourhood
13 — Beta Kappa
14 Small plateau
15 Dosage measurer
17 Low
18 Chief island of Japan
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21 "Of course"
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DOWN

1 Maze option
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5 Re a husband or wife
6 Discoverer's call
7 Flight needs
8 Stains
9 Earring shape, often
10 Being (Lat.)
11 Sail holder
16 "That's a relief!"
20 Mimic
23 With it
24 Classifieds
25 Education
27 Buck's mate
29 Anger
30 Greek vowel
32 Claims
34 Not loud enough
37 Ruin the veneer
39 Coed quarters, maybe
42 Dissuade
44 Street urchin
45 Competent
46 Haul
48 Logical
49 Sicilian spouter
50 Whatever remains
53 Prior to

Sudoku

For more/less challenging Sudoku puzzles, visit metronews.ca

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

	7				2	5	4	
		6					9	1
				3		8		2
			8	9				5
	9						7	
5				4	1			
9		8		7				
2	3					6		
	5	7	4				2	

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:

2	8	9	1	5	6	3	4	7
3	5	7	2	4	8	9	6	1
6	4	1	3	7	9	2	8	5
8	7	4	6	2	5	1	9	3
5	9	3	8	1	7	4	2	6
1	6	2	4	9	3	7	5	8
4	2	5	7	8	1	6	3	9
7	3	8	9	6	2	5	1	4
9	1	6	5	3	4	8	7	2

On the web

For more games and 60 additional daily cartoon strips, visit metronews.ca

Metro Recipe of the Day

Tarragon Flounder

INGREDIENTS:
2 flounder fillets (4 oz/113 g each)
1/2 cup (125 ml) chicken broth
2 tbsp (25 ml) butter, melted
1 tbsp (15 ml) minced fresh tarragon or 1 tsp (5 ml) dried tarragon
1 tsp (5 ml) ground mustard

METHOD:
1. Place fillets in a greased 11-in. x 7-in. x 2-in. (28 cm x 18 cm x 5 cm) baking dish. Combine remaining ingredients; pour over fish.
2. Bake, uncovered, at 350 F (180 C) for 20-25 minutes or until fish flakes easily with a fork. Remove to a serving plate with a slotted spatula. Serve immediately.

SERVES 2

rd.ca

For nutritional information on this and other great recipes, go to rd.ca or check out Key Ingredients in this month's Reader's Digest, on newsstands now!

Horoscopes by Sally Brompton sallybrompton.com

For Sally's expanded daily and weekend horoscopes, visit metronews.ca

ARIES
MARCH 21-APRIL 20
You're no stranger to hard work and as from today you will begin to enjoy the rewards of your labours.

TAURUS
APRIL 21-MAY 21
You will experience one of those "Eureka" moments today. Out of nowhere you will see the pattern that you have somehow missed.

GEMINI
MAY 22-JUNE 21
You may have found it difficult to confide in people in recent weeks but now the cosmic picture is beginning to change and you can get through.

CANCER
JUNE 22-JULY 22
Even if you are one of those Cancerians who knows how to charm, you may have found it hard to communicate your feelings in recent weeks.

LEO
JULY 23-AUG 23
You owe someone a favor and if you go out of your way to make good on it today, they may even end up owing you.

VIRGO
AUG 24-SEPT 22
A Mercury-Saturn union in your sign means you can see things as they are rather than as you wish them to be.

LIBRA
SEPT 23-OCT 23
You may have been in the dark of late but as from today you will understand what has been going on and why you were kept out of the loop.

SCORPIO
OCT 24-NOV 22
You may have found it hard to explain why you believe certain apparently illogical things, but today you'll find your tongue.

SAGITTARIUS
NOV 23-DEC 21
For various reasons, both personal and professional, you have held back from letting certain people know what you think of them.

CAPRICORN
DEC 22-JAN 20
You rarely leave anything to chance and with mind planet Mercury aspecting your ruler Saturn, you will know with absolute certainty.

AQUARIUS
JAN 21-FEB 18
If you are having second thoughts about a deal you signed up to there is still time to back out of, but it's got to be now.

PISCES
FEB 19-MARCH 20
Don't worry if you have found it hard to get through to loved ones in recent weeks because today's Mercury-Saturn union in your opposite sign will help.

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